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THE

MENDELSSOHN FAMILY

VOL. I.

A. Mendelssohn — Bartholdy

THE

MENDELSSOHN FAMILY

(1729–1847)

FROM LETTERS AND JOURNALS

BY

SEBASTIAN HENSEL

WITH EIGHT PORTRAITS FROM DRAWINGS BY WILHELM HENSEL

SECOND REVISED EDITION

TRANSLATED BY CARL KLINGEMANN
AND
AN AMERICAN COLLABORATOR
WITH A NOTICE BY GEORGE GROVE, Esq., D.C.L.

VOL. I.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

A BOOK on Felix Mendelssohn's family, in which he himself is the principal figure, full of new letters and new characters, and of wit, cleverness, and goodness, wants no recommendation to the English public.

There are few persons whose intimate correspondence can be laid bare to the extent to which his has been, without suffering from the process. In his case, however, the reverse is true; and of the many new letters by him here printed, often of a very private nature, there are few that do not add some new trait of nobility, goodness, tenderness, or delicacy of feeling to his portrait. For the history of his works, and of the development of his genius and talent, the book is indeed invaluable.

Felix's letters, however, though the main feature of the 'Mendelssohn Family,' are by no means its only one. Not to speak of the early and more historical portion of these volumes, to the majority of readers Felix's father will be a new and unexpected character. His letters from Paris and London abound in humour, shrewdness, and amusing gossip of that now remote date; and those addressed to Fanny on her confirmation and other occasions will be read with respect and interest by

many who differ from him in religion. The mother, too, is a new and very attractive personality.

The two sisters figure so largely in their letters and journals that it is unnecessary to do more than allude to them. They are entirely distinct, and each paints herself in unmistakable colours. Their journals are full of observation and ability, and bring a number of distinguished persons, in various walks of life, painters, statesmen, musicians, princes, men of business, favourably and characteristically before us.

On the whole, both on its own account and for its connection with Felix Mendelssohn, this work deserves a warm welcome from the English reader, to whom it is now for the first time introduced.

G. GROVE.

PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND GERMAN EDITION.

THE PREFACE to the first edition of this book was as follows:—

The work I now offer to the public was originally undertaken for a very different purpose and from a very different point of view. It was intended to be a biography not only of the family but for the family; I wished my children to know a little more of their forefathers than is generally the case, especially among the middle classes.

Some few friends saw this 'family biography,' compiled about fifteen years ago, and expressed a wish to see it published. I have preserved its original form as much as possible, and hope that it will be read as the chronicle of a good middle-class family in Germany.

A thorough revision was indeed necessary. Not that there was anything to conceal: what I have omitted was either of no interest to the public at large, or too sacred for publication, as, for instance, my mother's letters during her engagement, which are merely referred to. On the other hand, among the many thou-

sand letters that have passed under my eyes, I have not found a line which could give offence. Felix Mendelssohn especially, whenever he was unable to express approval, preferred to be silent rather than blame. But how unreserved he was in his admiration! How happy he was to find among his contemporaries, or his juniors, a glimpse of talent, or a nature congenial with his own!

One feature has remained of the original, for which, perhaps, I ought to crave indulgence: I could not make up my mind to exchange the affectionate terms 'father,' 'mother,' 'grandfather,' and 'grandmother' for the Christian names of such near relatives. It would have seemed to me unnatural to speak of my mother, in the narrative, as 'Fanny.' At the head of each letter, however, I have invariably placed the writer's name.

As many of Felix Mendelssohn's letters have been published already, I have thought it better to give precedence to those of his parents and sisters. But even of Felix's letters, especially those previous to 1830, I had a rich store left, and the knowledge of his home and surroundings is, I think, important for understanding the development of his genius.

The sources from which I have drawn my narrative are chiefly a very rich collection of letters and my mother's journals, and for the last dozen years or so statements made to myself or personal recollections. Sometimes I have been compelled to admit passages that have been already printed, because the omission of them, especially in the case of Felix's letters, would have given a fragmentary character to the book. Unfortunately I have not been permitted to make use of a valuable collection of family letters addressed to Felix,

containing a host of interesting details, which would have filled up many gaps in the narrative.

The portraits are all excellent copies, by the phototype process, of my father's drawings. Of the other members of the family I have no drawings, or, at least, no perfect likenesses by my father.

My narrative closes with the year 1847, in which both Felix and his eldest sister Fanny, my mother, died. On them the interest of the public was mainly concentrated, and they were, besides, the links which bound together the family, now so widely dispersed.

The demand for a new edition has come with unexpected rapidity. I was aware from the first that many alterations were needed, for every suggestion made by the critics had occurred to my own mind, even while the book was passing through the press.

The plea I urged for using the familiar appellations of my parents and grandparents has been disallowed, and perhaps justly so. Print has a peculiar effect; and when I saw in type the letters hitherto known to me only in manuscript, I could look at them from the outside as one of the public, and I at once perceived the impropriety of constantly reminding the reader of my relationship to the persons introduced in the book.

Again, though I fancied that I had exercised a severe censorship in admitting or excluding material, I found that still more must be done in that direction, and that much of the gossip which would amuse the immediate circle of acquaintance, could have no interest for the general reader. This was the case especially with the two Italian tours which followed one another in rapid succession.

My chief labour, therefore, in preparing a new edition has consisted in expunging whatever could be omitted without sacrificing characteristic features, and also whatever related to my own position towards the persons in question.

Those letters of Felix's which had been already published, and have been again printed in my book, have been subjected to a further process of sifting. On the other hand, I have been able, among other additions, to incorporate a number of beautiful letters of Abraham and Leah Mendelssohn.

Lastly, the abrupt conclusion of the book with the year 1847 has been frequently regretted, and a wish expressed that I would trace the further history of the other chief persons in the book. This task, not an easy one, I have endeavoured to accomplish in the concluding chapter.

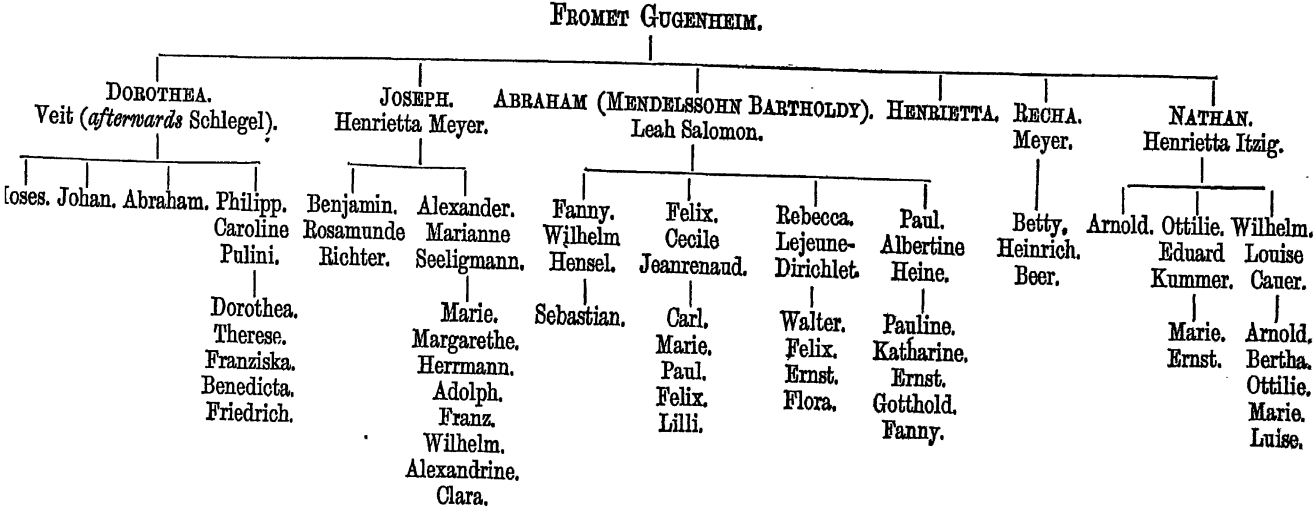
The present edition, especially the English translation, is much indebted to Mr. Grove and his elaborate article on Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy in the 'Dictionary of Music and Musicians,'[1] which he has kindly allowed me to use. In reference to this I would specially allude to the description of Mendelssohn's personal appearance, which Mr. Grove compiled for that article chiefly from the recollection of John Callcott Horsley, Esq., R.A., one of my uncle's very intimate friends. Besides these distinct obligations, Mr. Grove has taken a lively interest in the progress of the book and the translation, which I most gratefully acknowledge. To him I owe the correction of many dates, the orthography of various names in Felix Mendelssohn's letters of 1829, and several other points of interest.

To all those who have kindly assisted me in removing the deficiencies in the first edition I beg to express my gratitude, but especially to Mr. Walter Robert Tornow, who still exhibits the same untiring interest in my work which he has bestowed upon it from the beginning.

The reception of the book on its first appearance was all that I could desire. Let me hope that it will find fresh friends in its new and, I trust, improved shape.

SEBASTIAN HENSEL.

PEDIGREE OF THE DESCENDANTS OF MOSES MENDELSSOHN.



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VOL. I.

1723-1835.

Blest he, to whom the annals of his fathers
Their gladness and their noble course of life
Are joyful reminiscence, sweetest love,
Himself in humbleness and pride a scion
Of that revered race.

(GOETHE, *Iphigenia.*)

MOSES MENDELSSOHN.

THE history of the early youth of great men generally reveals to us at a single glance the favourable circumstances that have contributed to their success. Sometimes we discover their parents themselves to have been persons of eminent character, sometimes particular teachers have animated the spark slumbering in the soul of the child, but in almost every case such men have grown up in the fertile soil of a cultivated society, rich in educational means. It was not so, however, with Moses Mendelssohn, and it is difficult to explain, considering the circumstances under which he grew up, how this man could have accomplished so gigantic a task under such exceptionally unfavourable conditions as we are about to mention.

In the middle of the last century the Jews in Germany were in a most oppressed condition; although no longer tortured and pillaged 'in majorem Dei gloriam,' they were subjected by the law of the State to every possible restriction; nearly every career was made inaccessible to them; in many towns residence was absolutely forbidden them, in others only a certain number were permitted to dwell, and even now in many places a 'Jews' quarter' still exists. In one town they were not allowed to live at the corner of a street, in another only a certain number of marriages were permitted; everywhere they had to pay various imposts, some of an intentionally opprobrious nature, in addition to the common government taxes. For instance, under Frederic William I. the Jews of Berlin were obliged to buy the wild boars killed at the royal hunting parties,[1] and under Frederic the Great every Jew had to purchase, on the occasion of his marriage, a certain amount of china from the newly established royal china factory in Berlin, and that

[1] Streckfuss, *Berlin seit* 500 *Jahren.*

not according to his own choice, but that of the manager of the factory, who made use of the opportunity to get rid of things otherwise unsalable. Thus Moses Mendelssohn, a man even then generally known and honoured, became possessed of twenty life-sized china apes, some of which are still preserved to the family.

Nearly the only trade left to the Jews was retail traffic, and even this not without exceptions. For instance, they were not allowed to sell groceries, this trade belonging to the guilds; there remained therefore only the permission to deal in old clothes, and in money—a trade called by the opprobrious name of *usury*.

Under these unfavourable circumstances the Jewish nation remained unbroken; no persecution could shake their adherence to the religion and customs of their ancestors. On one side was everything that could tempt mankind, admission into society, participation in the affairs of the state, influence; on the other, only the prospect of enduring a plagued and despised existence, with no better prospect for their children to the end of time. A change was, however, to be bought only at the price of a denial of certain convictions; and through thousands of years the Jewish people have remained steadfast. The number of those who, without conviction, have embraced the Christian faith is incalculably small.

But though the nation remained thus unbroken, it would have been unnatural if the long suppression of all noble qualities, the long restriction to the lowest and meanest branches of commerce, and the separation from the great stream of civilisation had not borne both good and evil fruit. Some noble qualities were the more richly developed by the forced concentration of the race—love of family, unbounded respect of children for their parents, a feeling of clanship, earnestness in religion, most liberal exercise of charity, and indefatigable industry in the few branches of human activity left open to them. That was the bright side of the Jewish national character as it had been developed in the course of centuries. But the other side was darkly shadowed: the nation became petrified, all progress was stopped, it lost all wide

views; the people had a language of their own, a strange mixture of Hebrew and German, a peculiar way of wearing hair, beard, and dress. Their only study except medicine was that of their own religious books. And as it always happens when religion withdraws itself from communion with other intellectual life, the Jewish religion became stagnant, all life dropped out of its forms, dogmatic subtleties and hairsplittings were more and more spun out, and he who had mastered these was considered pious. Their written language was Hebrew, which in its root and whole character is more widely separated from modern culture than any other ancient language; thus the single study of the Jews of that period contributed only more and more to estrange them from modern culture. To this was added the circumstance of the teachers being for the most part Polish Jews, who were considered to be better versed in Scripture than the German. These of course were even less acceptable to the German Christians than their German brethren, and thus the gulf already existing became ever wider. A priestly caste always leans towards intolerance, even when drawn from the noblest and most highly educated part of a nation; but how much more so in this case, where it was composed of members of a foreign, ignorant, and uncultured nation. Persecution of the more enlightened, interdiction of every trace of education, patient clinging to the standpoint once adopted, was the task those Polish rabbis had set themselves. They justly feared that general education would overthrow their power, and therefore denounced every deviation from established custom, good or bad, as a sacrilege. To speak German correctly, to read a German book, was heresy.

Such was the state of things when Moses Mendelssohn was born, on the 6th of September 1729. His father, Mendel Dessau, was employed by the Jewish community of Dessau as clerk and teacher in the primary school, that is to say, he was a poor Jew, occupying a subordinate position in a small duchy of central Germany. His home was a very poor one, but old Mendel belonged, at least as far as was possible in the then state of Judaism, to the cultured few, and kept his son at his studies with unbending severity. When the boy was hardly

five years old, he had learnt all his father could teach him, and was sent to a kind of superior school. Thither the father carried him, a little boy, protected from the biting cold by only an old threadbare cloak, before the dawn of morning on a bitterly cold winter day. His new teacher, Rabbi Fränkel, was then considered a learned and unprejudiced Jew; the child soon clung with devoted love to him, and became his most zealous pupil. Not long afterwards Rabbi Fränkel was called to the post of chief rabbi at Berlin, and the critical moment of Moses' life arrived. His father's scanty means seemed to make further study impossible, and the boy was on the point of becoming a Jew pedlar, condemned to earn his bread by tramping through the villages with a pack upon his shoulders. But happily the almost insuperable difficulties which lay in the path to knowledge, the probability of years of want, the thought of being cast among strange and unfriendly surroundings, did not shake the boy's resolution. At the age of fourteen the small, shy, misshapen lad left his home and entered Berlin through the Rosenthal gate, at that time the only one through which strange Jews were allowed to pass, that he might once more be near his beloved master, who, he dimly felt, might be able to show him the way to a higher education. Years of the bitterest want followed; his poverty was so great that on the loaf he bought every week as his only food he marked his daily allowances with lines, knowing that if he had eaten more he would have had nothing left at the end of the week. He lived in a garret, and got a dinner now and then at the house of Hermann Bamberger; on the Sabbath and festival days he dined with Rabbi Fränkel, who also helped him to earn a few pence a week by copying; for study there remained but little time, and most people in his situation would have had even less inclination for it. Such were the physical difficulties; but others of a different kind, greater and more insuperable, rose up in his way. The Christians of those times considered the Jews as little their equals in mind and faculties as in our days the white inhabitants of America regard the negroes. Social intercourse between Jews and Christians was not to be thought of. In consequence, all Christian sources

of information were entirely closed against the Jews, and even if the Christians had not made the use of these impossible to them, the intolerance of the Jewish elders and rabbis would have rendered Christian vigilance needless. There were no Jewish sources of education except that intercourse with the few cultured Jews which Mendelssohn eagerly sought. He had to teach himself almost entirely without any systematic aid from others; and he was even obliged to keep his studies strictly secret for fear of being expelled from Berlin by his own brethren. Even a long time afterwards, when he was at the height of his glory and in the maturity of his manhood, they anathematised him. Of this circumstance Lessing writes: 'I look on him as the future glory of his nation, if his own brethren, who always have been instigated by an unhappy spirit of persecution against men of his kind, will but let him reach maturity.' In a word, he had against him everything that the world contains of narrowness, sectarianism, and intolerance on the part of Christians as well as Jews.

In the beginning Mendelssohn had no further aim than that of gaining information for himself; but a great mission of reformation was in store for him, and was soon to open. Like the original Moses, he found a degenerate, neglected, enslaved nation, though in a different period, and under essentially different circumstances. His clear glance informed him that, in consequence, other means had to be employed. At the time of the great legislator, the whole nation was concentrated in the Delta of Egypt; the conditions of life and property were simpler; nomad life and the migration of whole nations were not unfrequent. Thus Moses was enabled to lead his people from Egypt to Palestine and to regenerate them by a new legislation. But in Mendelssohn's time the Jews were scattered all over the world, and had by perpetual intercourse grown closely absorbed in the established nations. It was no longer practicable to organise an emigration *en masse*, and it is worth reading how decidedly Mendelssohn rejected the plan, designed by a man in high position, of founding a Jewish empire in Palestine, even though it was one of the articles of his faith that the Jews would not always be dispersed, but would 'at a

future day' be re-established by the Messiah as a free nation in the land of their fathers. He felt perfectly assured that this 'future day' was still future. At the same time Mendelssohn saw no reason why the Mosaic legislation should be attacked. It had proved efficient in former days, and he thought it suitable enough for his own time to be worth preserving. Thus though the Jews were to remain Jews, and to remain in the land in which they were settled, yet Mendelssohn found a Palestine into which to introduce them—cultured society. He first exhibited in himself the type of an educated Jew, and made this attractive enough to Christians to obtain admission for himself into all circles. He then made the Jews fit to follow his example, and enter through the breach that he had made. And the fate of Moses was also that of the great reformer: he did not see accomplished the entrance of his people into the land to which he had conducted them. The work continues to this day, and the Jews are daily gaining a more assured and honourable position in society, art, and science; and it is not too much for me to say that every German Jew who now distinguishes himself anywhere owes the power of doing more or less directly to Moses Mendelssohn.

About the year 1744 he took the first decided step on the path of improvement: he learnt German. This was a very dangerous undertaking, and had to be done with the greatest secrecy. Another Jew, whom Mendelssohn was teaching, was detected in procuring a German book for him, and was immediately expelled from Berlin by the Jewish authorities. Representations were unsuccessful, but Mendelssohn afterwards secured a place for him at Halberstadt. His association with a few educated Jewish medical men helped him to get on; for instance, Dr. Risch for about half a year taught him Latin for a quarter of an hour daily, but he owed nearly everything to his own iron will and application. 'I have never been to any university,' he writes in after-days, 'neither have I ever heard a lecture, and one of the greatest difficulties I had to surmount was that I had to obtain everything by my own effort and industry.'

This life lasted till 1750, when he entered the family of Mr.

Bernhard, owner of a silk factory, as tutor. The hardest times of trial were over; at least he had no longer to struggle for his daily bread, but was under the protection of a rich Berlin Jew, highly regarded by his brethren, and could now devote himself freely to his studies. He eagerly devoured everything; he occupied himself with everything he found; in a wonderfully short time he mastered old and new languages, mathematics, and chiefly philosophical questions of all kinds. But, in consequence of this way of working by himself, great deficiencies soon showed themselves in his knowledge. He always only studied what pleased him or what came into his way through chance acquaintances. Thus he afterwards complains bitterly of his limited knowledge of history. 'What do I know of history?' he writes to Abbot in the year 1765. 'None of the things called by that name, natural and cosmical history, political history, learned history, have I ever been able to master, and I always yawn when I have to read something historical, unless the style of writing interests me. I believe that the knowledge of history is never to be gained without teaching.' And in another letter we find: 'Tell me, dear friend, how I can manage to form an idea of the history of old and new times. Till now I have always regarded history as a study more fit for the citizen than for man, and believed that one who has no country of his own could not profit by history. But now I see that the history of political constitutions is strongly linked to the history of mankind, and that nobody ought to be altogether ignorant of either. But where ought I to begin? Shall I go to the source, or shall I content myself with those compendiums which are now so much the fashion? And of these, which would you recommend? Do not forget to answer this question.' We must own that the mental nourishment furnished in those universal compendiums of history could not be to the taste of such a mind, and we cannot be surprised at his yawning over them.

But the chief reason why Mendelssohn gave his studies a different direction was this: history was for him the study of the citizen, and the Jew of the eighteenth century was admitted to no citizenship. Every page of history showed him the op-

pression of his nation; there was no bright prospect to be found in those days, no sign of coming improvement. The empire of thought, the ideal domain of philosophy, became therefore his sphere of action. Thither he was, moreover, attracted by the natural acuteness of the Jews, by the love of the often abstruse Talmudic speculations to which Mendelssohn had devoted himself during his life at Dessau and the earlier part of his life at Berlin. Here he had to avoid a dangerous rock; he might easily have become a shallow cosmopolitan, for he could not consider himself as a citizen in a state which allowed him no field of action. On the other hand, Jewish ties made him at home in every country of the world, and nothing could have been more natural than to neglect all political and national barriers, and to devote himself wholly to visionary cosmopolitan speculation devoid of every substantial basis. How many men of an ideal turn of mind before and after him have gone astray in consequence of this mistake!

Between this extreme and the other equally dangerous one of utterly ignoring all higher ideal ends, entangling himself in the web of every-day affairs, and sinking down to the level of a mere individual in the community, Mendelssohn's discreet and harmonious nature chose a station equally fortunate and grand, far above the views of his time—the position of a German. Uninfluenced by the shining but hollow phantom of cosmopolitanism, unseduced by the consolidated power of the young and rising Prussia, which was then striking down the feeble remains of the old German empire, he proceeded to the furthest limit of practical action, in standing up for a German nationality. He appeared publicly as a German Jew, and thus became the living example of what his brethren had to struggle for—as a German by writing for the 'Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und freien Künste,' and especially for the 'Litteraturbriefe,' as a Jew in the famous Lavater controversy.

The 'Letters about Literature' owed their origin to Nicolai, but Lessing and Mendelssohn were the soul of the enterprise; they gave them the decided classical character of an unbending matter-of-fact criticism. The fashionable admiration and imitation of the French was attacked unsparingly, and the

foundation of a truly German national literature was firmly laid.

The 'Litteraturbriefe' were the precursors of the Hamburg 'Dramaturgie' and of the influence of Schiller and Goethe.

The best proof of the intrepidity shown by Mendelssohn in these letters is an article upon the 'poésies diverses' of Frederic the Great, in which the Jew, hardly tolerated in Berlin, censures the great king, puts forward the principle that every author must submit to criticism, and reproaches the king for despising the German language and preferring the French. This affair nearly brought Mendelssohn into a very disagreeable situation, but the danger was avoided by the magnanimous conduct of Frederic. The 'Litteraturbriefe' deservedly excited much interest, and after their appearance Mendelssohn was universally acknowledged as a champion of the cause of national German literature.

The over-zealous attempt of a Christian clergyman to convert him soon afterwards gave him an opportunity of making an open profession of his Jewish convictions. This man was Lavater, who during his travels in the year 1763 had made the acquaintance of Mendelssohn, and who, like all others, had been deeply moved by the charm of his personal influence. In his celebrated book on physiognomy he gives the following description of Mendelssohn: 'Probably you know the silhouette. I can hardly withhold it from you; it is very dear to me, very speaking. Can you say, can you for one moment pretend to say, "Perhaps a fool? A coarse, vulgar soul!" Let the man who could say such a thing, or even could allow another to say it, shut my book at once and throw it away, and let him allow me to prevent my thoughts from judging him. I rejoice to see these outlines. My glance descends from the noble curve of the forehead to the prominent bones of the eye. In the depth of this eye a Socratic soul resides. The decided shape of the nose, the magnificent transition from the nose to the upper lip, the prominence of both lips, neither projecting beyond the other—oh, how all this harmonises and makes the divine truth of physiognomy sensible and visible.'

But the 'divine truth of physiognomy' did not prevent its

enthusiastic prophet from being thoroughly mistaken in Mendelssohn. In the year 1769 he published a translation of Bonnet's evidence of Christianity, dedicated it to Mendelssohn, and challenged him publicly to refute the book or—to embrace the Christian faith.

Mendelssohn's position was a painful one. He had not the athletic nature of Lessing, who would have rejoiced in such a combat with a conceited churchman, in exposing him to public contempt, like Gölze, and crushing him in the sight of the whole world. Mendelssohn had always avoided controversies on religious subjects, and now a controversy was publicly forced upon him, in which he could not remain silent, and yet if he spoke must attack the Christian religion. Quarrels still more disagreeable, and in his position really dangerous, were sure to follow, if he spoke openly. But how could he speak otherwise, unless he sacrificed his holiest convictions?

Lavater's step can only be explained by religious prejudice. He truly loved Mendelssohn; he held him in high respect as an eminent writer and an excellent man: but he firmly believed that such a man must either be certainly, secretly, and in his heart a Christian, or at least favourably disposed towards the sacred truths of the 'only saving faith,' and anxious for an opportunity of professing them. He longed for the glory of having afforded him the opportunity of a public declaration, of ascribing the conversion of Mendelssohn to himself, and of leading such a soul to heaven; but the result was widely different from what Lavater and the Christians of his creed had expected. Mendelssohn answered—and his answer was, that he was a Jew by inmost conviction, that Bonnet's theses had not shaken his faith, that he even felt himself able to defend every religion founded on revelation by similar proofs. He did not annihilate his adversary, as Lessing would have done, but he let the sun of his clear mind shine so victoriously, so gently, and with such persuasion, that the mantle of Christian charity sank from the shoulders of his adversary, and the triumph of Mendelssohn was complete. Lavater saw with surprise how wrong he had been, and apologised most humbly. The adversaries remained friends, but a number of petty minds, who partly had rejoiced in the

expectation of piquant revelations, and partly had hoped for the certain humiliation of the despised Jew, now took up the quarrel, which was none of theirs, and attacked Mendelssohn. They were disappointed, for Mendelssohn, who had given one decisive answer to an adversary somewhat worthy of himself, took no notice of the small barking curs, and wrote: 'In this matter I do not care what summonses, requests, attacks, refutations may come, from whoever likes and as many as they like, polite or not polite. I shall not answer till I believe that I cannot employ my time more usefully;' and in another place: 'He who so openly shows his intention to rouse me shall find it difficult to succeed.'

However disagreeable this affair was to him, it proved very serviceable to Judaism: never had the Jewish cause been so gloriously defended, or by such a champion. Mendelssohn was a 'Jew by conviction'; this was a fact, and doubts like those of Lavater could no longer be entertained. Christians had to acknowledge the disagreeable fact that so distinguished a man was a Jew. Mendelssohn writes on a similar occasion: 'Trescho, Ziegra, and Bahrdt are wild with anger, that non-Christians should possess the power of reasoning. Happy for us, that God is more merciful than Trescho, Ziegra, and Bahrdt.'

Meanwhile the time had come for Mendelssohn to choose a profession. For some time he thought of availing himself of his profound Talmudic and other knowledge to become a rabbi. But he probably was influenced by the consideration that in this position many circumstances would deter him from his work of reform, the plan of which at that time was already completely settled. He preferred to remain absolutely free in this respect, and in order to gain a livelihood accepted the place of a book-keeper in the silk factory of the same Bernhard whose children he had educated. Time enough was left to him for his ever-increasing literary occupations, and yet he had not to look to his pen as a means for earning his bread. His independence, which he had always regarded as most important, was assured; even during the seven years of privation of the first Berlin period he had never allowed himself to beg pecuniary assistance from rich Jews. He used to say, 'I can found my claims to

assistance on nothing but my desire of learning, and what is that to others?' He retained his situation at the Bernhard factory to the end of his life, and employed his leisure in unceasing literary pursuits.

One of his very first works gives a striking view of his relation to his Christian contemporaries. This was 'Phædo,' partly a translation of Plato's dialogue of the same name, partly a modern adaptation of it to the philosophy of his own time, treating of the proofs of the immortality of the soul. Hardly any book of the period made such a sensation; it was translated into nearly all the modern languages, and, short as it was, gave its author a place among the classical writers of Germany. There is a certain relationship between the Socrates depicted by Mendelssohn in his 'Phædo' and himself. Thus we read: 'On one side he had to conquer the prejudices of his own education, to expose the ignorance of others, to confute sophistry, to bear the calumny and abuse of his adversaries, to struggle with poverty, to oppose the established power, and, most difficult of all, to disperse the dark terrors of superstition. On the other side he had to spare the weak minds of his fellow-citizens, to avoid scandal, and to preserve the good influence which even the most absurd religion exercises on the morals of the simple-minded.

'He overcame all these difficulties with the wisdom of a true philosopher, with the patience of a saint, the unselfish virtue of a philanthropist and the resolution of a hero, at the expense and with the loss of all worldly advantages and pleasures. Yet these higher duties of a citizen of the world did not hinder him from fulfilling the common duties towards his country,' etc. Truly this description suits Moses Mendelssohn even better than Socrates.

Mendelssohn's circle of acquaintance now grew larger; in enumerating his friends, we should have to mention nearly all the great men of the time: d'Argens, Maupertuis, Nicolai, Herder, Kant, T. H. Jacobi, the Duke of Brunswick, Campe, Dalberg, Hamann, Michaelis, Lavater, are some of the names we find in his correspondence. Those who came into personal contact with him were so struck by the charm of his

manners as to forget all prejudices, even though they came back with more intense power afterwards, when his presence no longer exercised its influence; it is only thus that we can explain the unfair proceedings of some, such as Herder and Hamann, against him. But first of all—first in regard to the greatness of the man himself, to the sincerity and duration of his friendship, and the result to which it led—we must name Lessing.

They are said to have been brought together by the game of chess, but they soon discovered the close affinity of their minds, and all their later doings were influenced by their mutual intercourse. We have already mentioned how they worked together for the 'Litteraturbriefe'; their correspondence bears testimony how they understood friendship. Mendelssohn especially often reminds Lessing of his faults, and each acknowledged in the other an ever-present judge of his deepest thoughts. We need only mention the touching conclusion of Lessing's last letter to Mendelssohn, written but a few weeks before his own death:—

'On that little note of yours which Dr. Flies lately brought me I am still ruminating with delight—the strongest expression in this case is the noblest. And truly, dear friend, I want such a letter now and then, if I am not to become quite melancholy. I do not believe you think me a man longing only for praise. But the coldness that the world exhibits towards some men, who never can satisfy it, is, though not killing, certainly freezing. I am not at all astonished that you should not approve of all I have lately written. Nothing ought to have pleased you, for nothing was written especially for you. Only the remembrance of our better days may have deceived you here and there. I too was then a slender, healthy young tree, though now but a gnarled old rotten stump! Alas, dear friend, life's drama is over! yet I should like to speak with you once more!'

Lessing has erected the most beautiful monument to his friend in his 'Nathan the Wise.' This may have partly originated in Lavater's request to Mendelssohn to embrace the Christian faith. Most characters in 'Nathan' have undoubtedly

been taken from the circle of Mendelssohn's household, and above all the noble, judicious, mild, and tranquil character of Nathan himself is an exact portrait of Moses Mendelssohn. The dervish is an imitation of Wolf, a Jewish teacher, who was often seen in Mendelssohn's house, and who instructed his children; and Joseph, the eldest son of Mendelssohn, believed that the parallel might be continued much further.

It was also Mendelssohn's intention, after Lessing's death, to raise a worthy literary monument to the memory of his friend; but unhappily it was never finished, and the beautiful plan, which he would have been able to accomplish better than any one else, remained a fragment. We only possess a short sketch of Lessing's character in a letter to Hennings: 'I am now occupied by one only thought, the death of Lessing. It does not sadden me or make me melancholy, but he is always present like the image of a beloved one. I fall asleep with him, I dream of him, I awake with him, and I thank Providence for the benefit of having known him so early and enjoyed his friendship so long. The world knows his literary value, but few know the treasure of his friendship. I even find that his moral value is not sufficiently acknowledged by many. The idea of virtue and morality is itself subjected to fashion, and he who cannot adapt himself to the fashionable ideas of his time, is misunderstood and calumniated by his contemporaries. But one thing cannot be doubted: if ever a man was better than he appeared in his writings, it was Lessing. He knew how to win over in one hour of personal intercourse most of those who had been opposed to him, and yet as far as my experience goes never a word of intentional flattery was uttered by him. He even had the—how shall I call it?—the oddity of being a professed enemy of superficial politeness. His social virtues rather consisted in genuine sympathy, earnest complaisance, a thorough want of selfishness and conceit, and a kind way of entering into anybody's views with such a liberal display of his own ideas, that people in a conversation with him thought themselves more ingenious than they really were, and yet deeply felt Lessing's superiority. Although sarcastic and bitter against every fool who imagined himself alone to have discovered truth,

he was amiable and modest towards every real seeker for truth, and always ready to help him from his stores of knowledge.'

To conclude our description of the beautiful friendship between the two men, we will quote the letter which Mendelssohn wrote shortly after Lessing's death to his brother:—

'Not a word, dear friend, of our loss, of the great blow our hearts have suffered. The memory of the man we have lost is too sacred for me to profane it by complaints. He now only appears to me in a light that spreads quiet and refreshing serenity on everything. No, I do not calculate what I have lost by his death. From the depth of my heart I thank Providence for having allowed me to know so early, in the bloom of my youth, a man, who has formed my soul, who was to me a friend and judge in all my actions, in every line I wrote, and whom I shall think of as a friend and judge every time I shall have to take an important step. If this consideration be somewhat tinged with melancholy, it is perhaps from remorse, that I did not avail myself sufficiently of his guidance, that I was not greedy enough for his instructive companionship, that I have let many an hour pass away in which I might have enjoyed his conversation. Ah! his conversation was a plentiful source, from which incessant new ideas of the good and beautiful could be drawn, and which he literally gave away like worthless water for anybody's use. The gentleness with which he imparted his ideas sometimes nearly made me forget his merit, for they did not seem to cost any effort, and he had a way sometimes of so mixing them up with mine that I found it difficult to distinguish them. This was altogether the difference between his liberality and the narrowness of many, who, though rich, let you feel that you are under their obligation; but he spurred one's application, and made you earn what he gave you.

'Considering all things, my dear friend, your brother has departed just at the right time, not only in the system of the universe, where nothing can happen at a really wrong time, but in this over-narrow sphere with its tiny diameter. Fontenelle says of Copernicus, "He made known his new system and died." The biographer of your brother can with

equal propriety say, He wrote "Nathan the Wise" and died. I cannot imagine any intellectual work surpassing "Nathan," as far as "Nathan" in my eyes surpasses all that he had written before. He could not rise higher without arriving at a region beyond the reach of our mortal sight. Now, like the disciples of the Prophet, we stand and gaze on the place whence he vanished into the skies. Only a few weeks before his death I had occasion to write to him: he ought not to wonder at the greater number of his contemporaries failing to appreciate the merit of this work; fifty years after his death posterity will have enough to do, and ruminate over and digest it. He was indeed more than a generation in advance of his century.'

To return, however, to Mendelssohn's sphere of action. Although through the Lavater controversy he had openly proclaimed himself the champion of Judaism, nothing positive for the Jews had yet been done. He now began his work of reform, taking as a model his own course of education, which had proved so efficient. First, German had to be learnt. The excellent remarks upon the nature of language in the 'Jerusalem' show how deeply Mendelssohn had considered the subject. In order to make German familiar to Jews as Jews, he translated from their own sacred writings the five books of Moses, the Psalms, and the Song of Solomon into that language. Others were to have followed, his plan being to go through the whole of the Old Testament in like manner, but death overtook him in the middle of his task. These books in the German tongue were printed partly in German, partly in Hebrew characters, to promote gradual familiarity with the German language, and at the same time to afford Christians an opportunity of reading a translation guiltless of theological or Christian interpretations. His own view of the Scripture is indicated by what he says in a letter to Michaelis: 'I have myself translated about twenty Psalms into German, and was not disinclined to publish them as "Specimens of the Lyric Poetry of the Hebrews." I must confess to being very little satisfied with any of the translations of the Psalms which have come under my notice; with the poetic versions still less than the prose. Even where they now and then hit upon the idea, the

peculiarity of the Hebraic poetic art is spoilt by the rhyming system of occidental poetry. I feel assured that you will treat the Psalms as poetry, without regard to the prophecies or mysticism which Christian and Jewish expounders have found only because they looked for them, and which they have looked for only because they were neither philosophers nor critics. It is perhaps dangerous openly to combat these deeply rooted prejudices; only, if we are to read the Psalms with rational edification, we must some day tread this path. The plain meaning of the Scriptures has been long enough obscured by mystical interpretations.

The translation was a difficult undertaking. Orthodox members of both religions were naturally displeased with Mendelssohn's liberal and unprejudiced conception, and it was to be expected the Jewish rabbis and Talmudists especially would set heaven and earth in motion again both translation and translator. But they found in Mendelssohn a well-matched adversary, whose former Talmudic studies now stood him in good stead. The translations soon found a large public, and still form the foundation of all Jewish education of youth.

Other highly influential works followed. He had a translation made of Rabbi Manasseh Ben Israel's 'Vindiciæ Judæorum,' a work written for Cromwell in the year 1656, and wrote a preface thereto. This preface, though only twenty-two pages long, contains views far in advance of the standpoint of that time, expressed in such a finished style that it may well be reckoned as a pearl among his works. It was followed by 'Jerusalem, or Religious Power and Judaism,' a great work, worthily ranking alongside of the preface just mentioned, in which the questions there touched upon are further developed, and which may be considered in a manner as Mendelssohn's politico-religious testament. 'Separation of Church and State' is his concise demand: he has left it to be fulfilled by the nineteenth century. According to his philosophic nature he deduces each successive step from speculative principles, and thus puts his whole argument out of reach of political or party controversy. Mendelssohn, peace-loving as he was, never expressed special political opinion, at least not publicly,

although his views as from his usual mode of thought was to be expected, were decidedly free.

The last years of his life were occupied by a most aggravating dispute concerning Lessing's philosophical tenets. But he knew how to draw honey out of even such poisonous flowers as these. The 'Morning Hours' owes its existence to this controversy. If we call 'Jerusalem' the politico-religious testament of Mendelssohn, we may call the 'Morning Hours' his philosophical one. It had at the same time an amiable purpose, being designed for the instruction of his children, principally Joseph, the eldest, and a number of young people 'of precious mental gifts and still better hearts,' who daily gathered round him.

With regard to Mendelssohn's special philosophical activity, it is undeniable that he did not belong to the number of great philosophers who have struck out new paths for themselves.

Of his relations to Lessing and Nicolai, Erdmann observes, 'What was never doubted by their contemporaries, that these three rank together as friends and companions in one work, is in our days regarded by many of Lessing's admirers as a depreciation of Lessing. Partly they are right; for it is evident that Lessing, subjectively and objectively, takes quite a different position from that of the other two. But only partly, for first of all they mistake the position of the three men when they regard Lessing simply as imparting and the other two as receiving. It can be proved that many of those ideas made famous in their development by Lessing were first expressed by Mendelssohn. It is asserted by Lachmann that even with regard to language Lessing must have gained much through intercourse with one who had learnt pure German not as a child but with full consciousness. Secondly, they overlook that Lessing died in the very year when Kant's 'Critique of Pure Reason' appeared, and that therefore the conflict which had occupied his whole life was carried on only against principles which were becoming obsolete; at the very time, indeed, that he was providentially prevented from carrying out his intentions of attacking Goethe's 'Werther.' This would hardly, as Nicolai thought, have discredited Goethe in the eye

of posterity as much as Klotz. On the other hand, Mendelssohn felt called upon, directly after Lessing's death, to state his ideas of Kant and Spinoza in opposition to Jacobi, that is, to treat of men who stood partly outside of, partly above, the range of thought of the eighteenth century, to which Mendelssohn essentially belonged.

In connection with Mendelssohn's relation to Kant, it is a remarkable coincidence that both competed, in the year 1763, for the academical prize, which Mendelssohn carried off with his Essay on Evidence. Subsequently, indeed, Kant passed him by a long way; and when in the year 1782–83 the 'Critique of Pure Reason' appeared, Mendelssohn frankly acknowledged that, accustomed as he was to the mild light of the Wolf-Baumgarten-Leibnitz School of Philosophy, he felt himself incapable of following the great Königsberg philosopher. The two men continued in lasting friendly intercourse, and Kant was a thorough admirer of the delicacy of perception, fine style, and fearless zeal for religious freedom of his former rival.

Erdmann, in his sketch of the History of Philosophy (§ 493), states Mendelssohn's position amongst his contemporaries in philosophy. He says: 'The principal difference between Mendelssohn and Baumgarten, or the other metaphysicians of the old school, is in his method of treatment. He insists not only on German but cultivated, good German. Plato is in his eyes such a great philosopher much less on account of the contents of his teaching than on account of his brilliant diction. Not strict philosophic treatment, but the style of cultured conversation, is his ideal; which accounts for the epistolary or conversational form into which he so willingly drops, even where another form had originally been chosen.

'However much he insists upon distinct ideas, however much he regrets that imitation of the French which has reduced men to writing for ladies and to neglecting solid knowledge, still he shows plainly enough that he is no university-educated learned pedant, that he chooses a middle place between metaphysician and *bel esprit*, and writes not especially for one school but for the world. Writes about what? Not one of the subjects concerning which we have spoken as possessing

an interest for philosophers exclusively has he left untouched, and by this versatility alone he takes such a high position among these drawing-room philosophers, not taking into account that it is he who above all (like Protagoras among the Sophists) reminded us of the fact that the chief object of philosophy is man.'

Mendelssohn's outward life we have ceased to record since he entered Bernhard's silk factory as book-keeper. This commercial occupation (at a later period he carried on the factory independently, and after the death of Bernhard became a partner in the business) was often irksome and unpleasant to him, when he had some learned subject in his head; and his letters are full of complaints. 'The whole day I hear so much useless talk, hear and do so many frivolous, tiring, stupefying things, that it is no small benefit to me in the evening to converse with a sensible being,' he writes to a friend. In this and all other respects he pours out his heart most copiously to Lessing. 'This tiresome, oppressive business! It drags me to the earth and devours the strength of my best years. Like a pack-ass I plod through life with a load on my back; and unfortunately self-love whispers in my ear, that perhaps nature intended me for a racehorse.' And again in another place: 'A good book-keeper is certainly an uncommon creature, and deserves a very high reward, for he must resign wit, perception, and sense, and become a mere block of wood, in order to keep books properly. Does not such sacrifice for the sake of money deserve the highest compensation? How do I chance upon such a thought to-day? you ask. You could not well guess that it is through H. von Kleist's new poems. I had them sent to me this morning at 8 o'clock, intending to give our dear Nicolai an unexpected pleasure by reading them with him. But I was prevented—the tiresome people! What is your business, friend? And yours, good man, and yours, neighbour? Leave me alone for to-day, I really can't. "But it is not a holiday?" Not exactly, but I am ill; you don't mind, come again to-morrow. These people obliged me, but my principal did not, for I got work to do till midday. I read a bit here and there during my work, and then I found how hard it is at once to be a book-

deeper and to have feelings. I began to think of literature and commerce together, and in the midst of my books my thoughts took a flight worthy of any ode. I cursed my position, sent the poems to our squire, who lives on his income, alas! not unenvied, and got cross.'

Although Mendelssohn had so much worry with business, it was not unfavourable to his health; indeed, during an illness of several years, when all mental exertion, even letter-writing, was forbidden, it was a benefit to work a little in his business; for absolute idleness would have been death to him. Besides this, one may ascribe to this hard substratum of mental activity that practicality, that regard for the possibly attainable, that ready adoption of the most suitable means, which are such characteristic peculiarities of Mendelssohn. The active life of a merchant is hostile to all floating in fantastic, airy regions; it gave him knowledge of men as they really are, and of the means by which men are worked upon. It is very questionable if Mendelssohn could have given so practical an answer to the 'man of position' with his Palestine project, if he had not as a merchant remained in close connection with the world, or that he would have written such sentences as the following: 'I am only too conscious what small influence my words or my representations can have upon the world in general. My sphere is limited to a few friends, and, since I have had to educate children, has narrowed even more. Outside this sphere I neither have nor seek to have any influence. I feel the limits of my powers, and keep within them, quietly and tranquilly, because I can add nothing to my mental stature.'

Mendelssohn was short, and much misshapen; he had a hump upon his back, and he stammered; but his clever, intellectual head, of which Lavater has given so lively a description, made up for all, as is often the case with deformed persons. Physical beauty is an excellent letter of recommendation in intercourse with mankind, but nothing more, for the qualities that lastingly enchain us are of another kind, as is proved by Mendelssohn's great popularity in the widest circles, and by the unceasing friendship entertained for him by such a man as Lessing. He enjoyed, however, not only the love of all who came in contact with him

but was also very happily married. During a visit to Hamburg in the year 1762 he became acquainted with Fromet, the daughter of Abraham Gugenheim, and in the following year married her. Berthold Auerbach, in his book 'At a good Hour,' thus describes the manner in which he won his wife:—

Moses Mendelssohn was at the baths of Pyrmont, when he became acquainted with Gugenheim, a merchant of Hamburg. 'Rabbi Moses,' said Gugenheim one day, 'we all admire you, but my daughter most of all. It would be the greatest happiness to me to have you for a son-in-law. Come and see us in Hamburg.'

Mendelssohn was very shy in consequence of his sad deformity, but at last he resolved upon the journey, and on his way visited Lessing at Brunswick.

He arrived in Hamburg and called upon Gugenheim at his office. The latter said, 'Go upstairs and see my daughter; she will be very pleased to receive you. I have told her so much about you.'

He saw the daughter, and the next day came to see Gugenheim, and presently asked him what his daughter, who was a very charming girl, had said of him.

'Ah, most honoured rabbi,' said Gugenheim, 'shall I candidly tell you?'

'Of course.'

'Well, as you are a philosopher, a wise and great man, you will not be angry with the girl. She said she was frightened on seeing you, because you——'

'Because I have a hump?'

Gugenheim nodded.

'I thought so; but I will still go and take leave of your daughter.'

He went upstairs and sat down by the young lady, who was sewing. They conversed in the most friendly manner, but the girl never raised her eyes from her work, and avoided looking at him. At last, when he had cleverly turned the conversation in that direction, she asked him:—

'Do you believe, then, that marriages are made in heaven?'

'Yes, indeed,' said he, 'and something especially wonderful

happened to me. At the birth of a child proclamation is made in heaven, He or she shall marry such and such a one. When I was born, my future wife was also named, but at the same time it was said, Alas! she will have a dreadful hump-back. O God, I said then, a deformed girl will become embittered and unhappy, whereas she should be beautiful. Dear Lord, give me the hump-back, and let the maiden be well made and agreeable!'

Scarcely had Moses Mendelssohn finished speaking when the girl threw herself upon his neck: she afterwards became his wife, they lived happily together, and had good and handsome children, whose descendants are still living.

That this was a love-match is shown by a letter to Lessing,[1] in which he says: 'The woman whom I am about to marry has no property, is neither learned nor beautiful, yet nevertheless I, infatuated fool, am so wrapt up in her that I believe I shall be able to live happily with her.' And that he did so is proved by his words to Abbt in 1766:[2] 'I have for a long time been suffering extreme anxiety: I have lost an aged father, a child of a few months old, and have been in danger of losing my wife, who is dearer to me than father or child.'

Mendelssohn's income was very limited; many of his writings, as for instance the translation of the Pentateuch, he published gratuitously; private property he had none, and was therefore obliged to be dependent upon his salary as a book-keeper. Here the management of his wife, who arranged everything on the most economical principles, must have been invaluable. We are told that in the evenings, when Mendelssohn always kept open house, Fromet would count the almonds and raisins for dessert, so as to prevent waste in trifles lest the household should want in more important things.

Mendelssohn had many children. Two died young, one a girl of eleven months old, of whom he writes to Abbt: 'Death has knocked at my door and robbed me of a child, which has lived but eleven innocent months; but God be praised, her short life

[1] Without a date. Moses Mendelssohn's complete writings, vol. v. p. 165.
[2] See *Letters to Lessing*, published by Redlich, Berlin, 1879, p. 166.

was happy and full of bright promise. My friend, the dear child did not live these eleven months in vain. Her mind had even in that short time made quite an astonishing progress; from a little animal that wept and slept, she grew into the bud of a seasoning creature. As the points of the young blades of grass press through the hard earth in spring, one could see in her the breaking out of the first passions. She showed pity, hatred, love, and admiration, she understood the language of those who spoke, and endeavoured to make known her thoughts to them. Is no trace of all this left in the whole of nature? You will laugh at my simplicity, and see in this talk the weakness of a man who, seeking comfort, finds it nowhere but in his own imagination. It may be; I cannot believe that God has set us on His earth like foam on the wave.'

A son of his died at the age of twelve years, and there remained to him three sons and three daughters, who were brought up in the best manner, and educated by excellent teachers, regardless of any expense that might insure them a place among the most cultured. From the letter written by Mendelssohn to Herz Homberg, who was once their tutor and afterwards settled in Vienna, we perceive that he was a loving though by no means blind father, that he carefully and with keen glance followed the development of his children, rejoiced in the prospect of their talents, while at the same time he clearly recognised their faults.

Mendelssohn divided his time in the following manner: in summer and winter he rose at five o'clock, and occupied himself for several hours with study. This habit gave origin and name to his last work, 'The Morning Hours.' From nine to three he spent in the factory. But here also there stood a little library of scientific works, of which he made use at every leisure moment that business permitted. Strangers wishing to see him often sought him there, and in quick succession workmen with samples, learned men with philosophical statements, merchants with trade affairs, office business, and quiet moments over his books came in turn. He treated everything with uniform clearness, and such constant variety helped tc preserve his elasticity of mind.

After three o'clock his afternoons were free, and were devoted partly to study, partly to recreation in the open air. At that time Berlin was not the monster of brick and mortar, with interminable dusty, evil-smelling streets, that it is in the present day, but in every direction one could easily escape into fresh air and get a peep of green fields and shady trees. But to the Jews a walk in any public place was in many ways embittered. 'I sometimes go out,' wrote Mendelssohn to Winkopp, 'in the evening with my wife and children. "Papa," inquires one of them in innocent simplicity, "what is it those lads call out after us? Why do they throw stones at us? What have we done to them?" "Yes, dear papa," says another, "they always run after us in the streets and shout, 'Jew-boy! Jew-boy!' Is it a disgrace in the eyes of these people to be a Jew? What is that to them?" I cast down my eyes and sigh to myself, Poor humanity! To what a point have things come!' To avoid such annoyance he hired a garden, to which in fine weather he could always go from his town house; it was in Spandau Street, and since his death has been marked by a memorial tablet. This garden is often mentioned by him in his letters with deep delight. It lay near to Nicolai's, and the friends stayed sometimes in one, sometimes in the other. 'Come to us,' wrote Mendelssohn to Lessing during the Seven Years' war; 'in our secluded garden-house we will forget how human passions are wasting the earth. It will be easy to forget the unworthy strife of covetousness, if we continue the discussion of those most important subjects which we have commenced in our correspondence!'

As the evening approached a circle of friends and acquaintances nearly every day assembled in Mendelssohn's house. A pleasant custom prevailed by which any person who had been once introduced into the house came afterwards in the evenings, uninvited, when he liked, and remained as long as he chose. People found acquaintances, as accident brought them together; a lively, ever-varied conversation was carried on, the suppers were simple, as was necessary for such improvised parties. So long as the family lived in Berlin, it was an example of this pleasant way of hospitality. There were scarcely

any remarkable men of Berlin, or distinguished strangers visiting that city, who were not the guests of the consecutive generations, in the house of Moses Mendelssohn, Abraham Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Hensel, and Dirichlet.

In Moses Mendelssohn's house at these evening meetings the conversation generally turned upon literary and artistic topics, seldom upon strictly scientific subjects. Moses generally sat as umpire in his arm-chair, with downcast eyes. But every one watched him and his movements. He often displayed a lively interest by some sudden outbreak or monosyllabic exclamation, or rewarded some speaker by smiling acquiescence. A rapid downward glance, a denying shake of the head, indicated his decided disapproval. If this had no effect, if one of the combatants would not yield to sensible argument, or when at last contradictory opinions crossed in confusion, he would rise from his chair, step between the disputants, and seem gently to beg a hearing. Then followed a pause, during which he took up the thread of the argument, developed the question at issue, placed thesis and antithesis in opposition with a brevity and clearness peculiar to himself, and let the arguers decide the point at issue without taking part with one or the other. When thus the heat of the discussion had been cooled down and a harmony of sentiment had been established, he would say: 'You see, gentlemen, it was simply a dispute of words, as is generally the case. I thought you were really of the same mind.' He completely adopted the Socratic method of argument, drawing forth what he wanted to teach out of the mind of his scholars, instead of forcing his own opinions upon them.

As neither Mendelssohn nor his wife were Prussians born, conformably to the conditions then existing they could only live in Berlin under the protection of some Jew who had been naturalised there. The Marquis d'Argens, who had by chance heard this, and who, coming from France, had never conceived such a state of things, could not believe it possible that a man like Mendelssohn should live in daily peril of being ordered out of the city by the police. He spoke about it to Mendelssohn, who confirmed the fact, and said: 'Socrates proved to his friend

Crito that a wise man is bound even to die when his death is demanded by the laws of the state. I must therefore consider the law of this state a mild one, since it simply banishes me, if in default of any other Jewish protection even a pedlar Jew should refuse to own me for his servant.' The marquis requested Mendelssohn to write a petition, which he himself offered to present. With this proposal he at first would not comply. 'It would be painful to me,' said he, 'to beg for that permission to exist which is the natural right of every human being who lives as a peaceful citizen. If, however, the state has weighty reasons for tolerating such people as my nation only up to a certain number, what privilege ought I to claim over my fellow-countrymen that I should ask for an exception in my favour?'

But the urgent entreaties of his friends succeeded at last in inducing him to draw up a petition, which d'Argens personally presented. Mendelssohn got no answer, and it turned out that the petition, whether intentionally or unintentionally, was lost. Upon a duplicate of it d'Argens wrote: 'Un philosophe mauvais catholique supplie un philosophe mauvais protestant de donner le privilège à un philosophe mauvais juif. Il y a trop de philosophie dans tout ceci, pour que la raison ne soit pas du côté de la demande.' Mendelssohn received the privilege in 1763. Later he begged for an extension of the same to his posterity, which Frederic the Great refused, but which was bestowed by Frederic William II. in 1787 upon the widow and children, as in the document is stated, 'On account of the acknowledged merits of your husband and father.'

Mild as Mendelssohn was, he was by no means deficient in ready wit. Teller once addressed him with the following joking lines:—

An Gott den Vater glaubt Ihr schon,
So glaubt doch auch an seinen Sohn.
Ihr pflegt ja sonst bei Vater's Leben
Dem Sohne gern Credit zu geben.

(You already believe in God the Father;—well, then believe in His Son also, as you so readily in commercial transactions give credit to a son in his father's lifetime.)

Mendelssohn replied:—

> Wie könnten wir Credit Ihm geben?
> Der Vater wird ja ewig leben.

(How could we give Him credit, as His Father will live everlastingly?)

And the crushing reply is well known that he made to an officer who impertinently asked him 'in what commodity he dealt.' 'In that,' said he, 'which you appear to need—good sense.'

A young author brought him an essay on the Freedom of the Human Will. 'I *could* not read your essay,' said Mendelssohn to him, when after a time he was asked his opinion. The author, somewhat piqued, apologized for having troubled him. Mendelssohn pacified him by the assurance that he had really been hindered from doing so. 'How could you have concluded from what I said before that I thought the essay bad?' 'Because I understood that you *would* not read it.' 'Then, as I hear you make a difference between *can* and *will*,' returned Mendelssohn, 'I need not read your essay upon Free Will; for, I take it, we agree upon the matter.'

Mendelssohn's health was always naturally weak, and had been undermined in early youth by overwork and insufficient food. But by means of an unusually regular life he kept himself in tolerably good condition, until the Lavater dispute brought on the severe nervous illness already mentioned, which rendered him for seven years incapable of study. The self-sacrificing watchfulness of his wife and a twice-repeated visit to the baths at Pyrmont somewhat restored him, and he enjoyed tolerably good health until the end of the year 1785. But the death of Lessing and the ensuing quarrel with Jacobi affected him too deeply. On the last day of December 1785 he took the manuscript of his last word in that dispute to Voss, his publisher. At the end of the last sheet he had written: 'I think that under such circumstances discussion avails little, and it is therefore better that we part. May he go back to the belief of his fathers, and reduce stubborn reason to obedience through the all-conquering might of faith, put down rising doubts (as he does in his appendix), with authoritative

and dictatorial sayings, and "bless and seal his obedience with words from the pious, angel-pure mouth of Lavater." I, for my part, remain in my Jewish unbelief, attribute to no mortal "an angel-pure mouth," would not myself depend upon the authority even of an archangel on a question which concerns that eternal truth upon which the salvation of man is founded, and where I must stand or fall upon my own feet. Or rather, since, as Jakoby says, "we are all born in faith," I return to the faith of my forefathers, which, according to the original meaning of the word, consisted not in belief in teaching and opinion, but in trust and confidence in the attributes of God. I place the fullest and most implicit faith in His omnipotence, which is able to give us the power of recognising without authority those truths upon which our happiness depends, and I cherish a childlike confidence that His mercy will grant me this strength. Fortified by this unwavering belief, I seek instruction and conviction wherever I can find them. And praise be to the all-goodness of the Creator, I believe that I have found them, and that every one else may find them who seeks with open eyes and does not voluntarily shun the light.'

On this walk to the publisher's he caught a cold, which seemed at first unimportant, but became quickly worse; and on January 4, 1786, he died. His end, like that of nearly all his progeny, was sudden and almost painless. His physician, Hofrath Marcus Herz, states [1]:—

'On the morning of Wednesday, at seven o'clock, his son came in great haste to me, and begged that I would immediately visit his father, who was very restless. I hurried to him and found him on his sofa. His appearance became more and more alarming, and whilst I was gone into the next room, to inform his wife and son-in-law of his state and beg them to summon assistance for me, I heard a slight noise from the sofa, sprang back, and found him fallen a little from his sitting position, with his head thrown back; pulse, breath, and life were gone. We tried various means to rouse him, but in vain. He lay

[1] See his account to Engel in the preface to Engel's pamphlet 'An die Freunde Lessing's.'

without motion, struggle, convulsion, or any warning of death, with his usual friendly smile on his lips, as if an angel had kissed his life away. The reason of his death was that natural but not very ordinary one, an apoplexy, the result of weakness. The lamp went out for lack of oil, and no one but a man of his wisdom, power of self-control, moderation, and inward peacefulness could, with such a constitution as his, have kept the flame alight for fifty-seven years.'

Universal sympathy was felt throughout Germany as the sad news was made known.

JOSEPH AND NATHAN MENDELSSOHN.

Moses Mendelssohn left three sons, Joseph, Abraham, and Nathan, and three daughters, Dorothea, Henrietta, and Frecka, in no very brilliant circumstances. He had been unable to save much money, and anxiety for the wellbeing of his children troubled the last days of his life. Some little time before his death a friend found him sitting under the trees before his house, and asked him, 'What is the matter, dear Mr. Mendelssohn? You look distressed!' 'Yes, so I am,' answered he; 'I am thinking of what my children will do when I am gone, for I can leave them but very little.' And Joseph Mendelssohn, his eldest son, as he relates this in the short biography which precedes the collected works of his father, adds: 'If as an enlightened spirit you look down upon us, your children upon earth, you will be convinced that God has taken your posterity under His care, that they all have sufficient, and are leading an honourable life.'

Moses Mendelssohn followed the development of his children with careful eyes. Thus he writes[1] to Herz Homberg of Joseph, the eldest: 'You want to know how my son, your pupil, is getting on? I must tell you that I am contented with his industry, he makes tolerable progress. I do not exactly know how much he has learnt out of this or that book; it is enough that he thinks, and thinks deeply and justly. His taste, too, is beginning to form itself. What I most regret is that stubbornness and want of gentleness in his character which, if not absolutely bad, is yet unpleasing, and may have at least an unfavourable influence upon his future fortunes. You know how he was always of that temper which would ten times

[1] M. Mendelssohn's collected works, vol. v. p. 670.

rather break than bend; so he is still. All my efforts have been so far unavailing. He is even Sophist enough to justify his weakness to his friends, who, much against my will, sometimes ridicule him. I almost give up the hope of seeing him improved in this respect, unless the love of some woman may induce him to control himself.' And in another place:[1] 'Joseph has as good as given up his Hebrew studies. Unluckily, after you left he fell into the hands of a scholastic man, master of the vain art of dispute. But, however much Joseph is devoted to subtlety and argument, he has no mind for mere hair-splitting.[2] A taste for this intellectual exercise is engendered by a particular species of instruction, and though we have both enjoyed that style of teaching, we agree in wishing that Joseph should rather remain somewhat blunter in wit than exercise his mind in such an unfruitful manner. The distaste for his master's teaching has given him a disgust for the whole subject. In solid knowledge he makes good progress, inquires deeply, looking round with firm and searching glance, but never makes those great leaps which might be expected of a young and fiery reasoner. We have as yet no determined plans with regard to his future life. I still feel undecided what to advise him. His talent and love for exact science induces us to expect something good of him in that department. But as a Jew he can only practise medicine, for which he has neither genius nor inclination. It is, I think, too early to devote him to trade. He might scramble through life as his father has done, half-merchant, half-scholar, even if he run the same danger of being neither one nor the other thoroughly.

'Willingly and justly as he thinks, he is yet slow and loth to write; though all that he does is good and sound. He seldom takes up the pen, only when he hears or himself thinks of something that seems to him important. He succeeds in familiar letters, but will write them only when he has ideas which he thinks worth communicating. The exercise of writing down one's thoughts is too much neglected even in our best

[1] See vol. v. p. 673, and elsewhere.

[2] This expresses the word used in the original Hebrew.

methods of education. To myself it is still always a task to put my thoughts into writing.

'The rest of the children go on as we expected, and mostly as we have wished, "not short, not tall, not wise, and not foolish,"[1] down to the youngest, Nathan, who calls himself *the wise*, and whose wisdom at present consists in looking to Swa for sweetmeats, to R. Samuel for gingerbread, and to Hanna the cook for all other needs.'

The result has taught us that Moses Mendelssohn was right in thinking a learned education would not spoil his son for a merchant's position. But he did not prophesy so correctly with regard to the 'scrambling through' and wavering between scholar and merchant, for Joseph entered into the latter position thoroughly. From small beginnings he laid the foundation of the banking-house still bearing his name, and at his death left it on the certain road to the importance it has since acquired.

Of the outward circumstances of the family immediately after Moses's death we do not know much. For the first few years the widow continued to live in Berlin, and there up to the end of the year 1804 Joseph had a small banking business, in which only two clerks were employed. Next, the family moved to Hamburg, where Joseph took part in a business with his younger brother Abraham, the bank in Berlin being still carried on.

Abraham's wife Leah describes the last years of her mother-in-law—who died in 1812, at a very happy green old age—and of her brother-in-law Joseph she speaks soon after her arrival in Hamburg, as follows: 'I can answer your inquiries after my new friends very satisfactorily. Up to the present I certainly like Joseph best. You know how clever and pleasant he is in conversation; I assure you, in these few days of unbroken intercourse with him, he quite won my heart, he seems to me so happy and kind, so good, warm, and lively in disposition. To see him with his beautiful children is a real pleasure to me, and he is so cordial and ready, much more so than people give him credit for; he is much respected as an active, clever

[1] A Jewish proverb.

[2] Alexander and Benny Mendelssohn

business man, whilst at the same time he takes an eager interest in literature and science. He seems to me too of a very happy temper, which in my eyes is one of the highest qualities, if I may say so. I mean, he has the kind of inward happiness which arises out of full enjoyment of life and activity of the mental powers, not out of narrowness and want of thought.'

During the occupation of Hamburg by the French the Mendelssohns, falling under their displeasure, were obliged to flee the town, and in mist and darkness they escaped one night in disguise, turning their steps towards Berlin. There they enlarged the banking business, from which Abraham afterwards separated, and it remained thenceforth the dwelling-place of the family. Joseph spent his leisure hours, up to the very last, in scholastic pursuits, and even as a grey-headed man took up many hitherto unknown branches of human knowledge, never resting until he had made them his own. The universal genius of Alexander von Humboldt, with whom until his death he maintained the closest friendship, must have had great influence upon him. One day Humboldt came in great vexation to tell him that his landlord had given him notice, and that he must move, which was a great annoyance to him on account of the trouble and damage involved in the packing and unpacking of his natural history collection. Joseph listened quietly and said nothing; but in the afternoon Humboldt received a letter from him saying that 'he might stay undisturbed in the house as long as he liked, for that Joseph was now his landlord, as he had bought the house.' Many instances of such liberality could be quoted from the history of his life.

Joseph had, like his father, the good fortune to die a quiet and painless death. His niece Rebecca, Abraham's daughter, wrote to the family on November 26, 1848: 'Joseph Mendelssohn died early yesterday morning. His end was of unexampled happiness, like his whole life. He was ill only a few days, never confined to his bed; only the day before he had busied himself with algebra, read, and slept well through the night. The cough from which he had suffered for several days gave way, and he let himself be dressed, then walked alone to his

arm-chair, in which after a few minutes he fell asleep. It was a long-anticipated loss, but none the less irreparable. A man of such remarkable powers is not often to be met with, and so richly favoured and varied a career contributed essentially to mental development. You know that I have seen him but very seldom, yet it grieves me much that he is no longer amongst us. We all feel ourselves the poorer for the loss of this quiet man, who after living for his family alone has closed his active, untiring life.'

These extracts from Leah's correspondence and that of her daughter—which is equally appreciative, though written at widely separated intervals of time—give us a picture of a long, useful, and complete life.

The youngest son of Moses, Nathan, lived partly in Silesia and partly in Berlin, where he had afterwards a small government appointment. He outlived all his brothers and sisters, and in the year 1852 died a sudden and painless death. Of his children many were very musical, an inheritance which was and is still granted to many of Moses's descendants.

THE DAUGHTERS OF MOSES MENDELSSOHN.

DOROTHEA, the eldest daughter of Moses, was born in Berlin in 1765, and is well known through her marriage with Frederick Schlegel.

Aided by her friendships with Henrietta Herz and Rahel, and the stimulating influence of the parental house, the active mind of Dorothea was developed to a higher degree than usually falls to the lot of her sex. It was a dangerous gift, especially as Moses Mendelssohn, however far he had advanced beyond his times and the standpoint of Judaism, seems still to have held by one hardly recommendable custom. In Jewish marriages at that time the destined bridegroom was seldom consulted, the bride never; the parents decided the fate of their children with unlimited authority. For ordinary Jewish marriages this probably did very well, the mental development of the men being very considerable and that of the women absolutely *nil.* But now the highly educated daughters of Mendelssohn, who had learnt to form great expectations of mental and moral worth, were to be 'bestowed' upon men in the same manner as the daughters of the lowest Jewish tradesman. There exists a very remarkable letter of Moses Mendelssohn which throws a clear light upon his manner of thinking on this point. Herz Homberg, who had been tutor in Mendelssohn's house, went to Vienna, there became engaged to a lady, announced the fact to Mendelssohn, and at the same time proposed a union between a relative of his betrothed and one of Mendelssohn's daughters. In his answer to the letter Moses says: 'Certainly my daughter and I and (if you will forgive my self-love) perhaps also you and E. would like this very well. One consideration only, one difficulty, lies in the way—one

which is not so easily removable. A marriage which does not arise from motives of self-interest must depend upon inclination. So far as I am personally acquainted with the excellent E., and through you have come to know him, I think him noble enough to rise above all considerations of interest, and to choose from inclination. But the inclination must be there before it can act, must be felt if it is to produce a result. It must not, however, be taken for granted, must not arise from hearsay, have nothing to do with tradition or mere belief, and must take cognisance only of the evidence of the senses, and of no other assurance, even though confirmed by signs and wonders. Like a teazing, capricious maiden, the inclination is to be found just where it is least expected, and disappoints you where you had anticipated to meet it. Its origin may now and then appear strange, but it has rarely adapted itself to a father's philosophy. As this theory of inclination is founded upon experience as well as upon principle, I would not willingly get an idea into my head which may make me dizzy. Indeed such a son-in-law as E. would be no small food for pride! Enough of this for the present.'

Upon what grounds, then, did he refuse the offer? They would be excellent ones, if the inclination of the lady were taken into account; but her father speaks only of the inclination of the man. Not one thought does he give to his daughter. The possibility that she also might possess any individual inclination does not occur to him; if only the man will like *her*, her consent is taken as understood, and 'she would be well off.'

This oriental view of woman as merely a chattel revenged itself on all the daughters of Mendelssohn. Dorothea, like her friend Henrietta Herz, was first married, in this manner, to a man for whom she had no affection, a Jewish merchant, Veit. He was a thoroughly good man, but he could not offer her the treasures of a deep and learned intellect, which Marcus Herz could give his wife, and which through the social circle of her father's house had become for Dorothea a real necessity. Their married life, though blessed by the birth of two sons, remained a thoroughly inharmonious one, and Dorothea sought nourishment

for her versatile mind in books and in the society of friends outside her own home.

In July 1797, in the Herz circle, she encountered Frederick Schlegel, a man who in spite of his youth (he was only five-and-twenty) already possessed literary fame, and whose diversified education, brilliant wit, and fine exterior must have lent him a great charm in her eyes. On the other hand, he also felt drawn towards her, although she was seven years older than he, and possessed no beauty.

The more these two true children of the romantic time grew attractive to one another, the looser became the bonds which united Dorothea to Simon Veit, and in the latter part of the year 1798 a separation was brought about, through the mediation of their friends Henrietta Herz and Schleiermacher. No special difference took place between them; after the separation Veit proved himself a constant and noble friend to her, whilst she remained a true self-sacrificing mother to their two sons, who remained with her. The youngest of these sons, who died full of years in 1877, was the celebrated painter, Philipp Veit.

For the present no marriage was concluded with Frederick Schlegel. After the separation from Veit he wrote in exulting terms to his sister-in-law Caroline (letter 120): 'Rejoice now that my life has found ground to stand upon, a centre and a definite form; wonderful things may come to pass.' The wonderful things consisted in the bringing forth of the well-known novel defended by Schleiermacher. In this the writer portrays himself in Julius, and the object of his affection in Lucinde, the heroine.

In October 1799 Schlegel took Dorothea to his brother William and his wife Caroline in Jena, where she was hospitably received. Here Augustus William Schlegel, who incited everybody to authorship, especially his unproductive brother Frederick, awoke in Dorothea also a desire to write. R. Haym, the excellent historian of the Romantic School, describes her literary activity in the following words [1]:—

'Poor Dorothea, she who with such inconsiderate resolution

[1] R. Haym, *Die romantische Schule*, Berlin 1870, p. 663 ff.

had bound her destiny to that of her friend, became indeed a poetess, she knew not why. There lay in her temperament much that, if united with creative power, heightens the worth of poetic art. She was capable of the most self-effacing resignation, the most self-sacrificing constancy, and showed both under the hardest trials in her relation to Frederick, a selfish, assuming, far from good-natured man. A strong spirit dwelt in this weak body, especially strong in self-control, patience, and self-denial. It is touching to see how she, with her whole heart, shared not only the intellectual interests but, harder still, the cares of her friend, and put up with his caprices. It was her pride to live for him alone, to excuse him, and to put the best face on everything. She stood between Frederick and Schleïermacher as "interpreter and supplementer," and always made it her duty to allay symptoms of bad feeling or misunderstanding. This *rôle* of patient endurance was made easier by her genuine modesty and unceasing cheeriness. There was no trace of weak sentimentality. Her letters, the earlier ones especially, reveal not only the true feelings of a woman, but a fine vein of bright, irrepressible humour, to which she gave vent in droll sallies, innocent badinages, and mischievous innuendoes. The occasion must have been a serious one (as indeed many were in her subsequent life) that could provoke her to bitterness and passion. On such occasions one can almost see how she turns up her nose and pouts her lips; it does not become her, but the ugly expression quickly disappears. Her rule is, in her own words, "never to restrain a laugh in the midst of her tears, wherever there is anything to laugh at." She certainly once does herself injustice when she blames herself for Frederick's want of success, and speaks of the discord born with her, and never to be got rid of. There was no want of harmony in her, except that which may well sometimes disturb a woman who finds her feeling itself controlled by a clear masculine understanding. She was a true daughter of Moses Mendelssohn. It was her openness and truth, her sound judgment, practical sense, and many other excellent qualities which made her of such value to men like Fichte and Schleiermacher. It is remarkable how thoroughly her

aspiring mind entered into the world of thought and imagination of the Romantic School, and yet through it all preserved unimpaired a sense for the unromantic reality, even in matters of household management. Now and then the suspicion comes across her that all matters of literary or æsthetic moment, which in her reverence for Frederick she also must regard as important, are in reality nullities. She wished very much to see Frederick an artist, but would have preferred even more to see him shine as the able citizen of a well-ordered state. The whole character and aims of her revolutionary friends seemed to her as much adapted to literature, criticism, and "such like stuff," as a giant is to a cradle, and, according to her views, they ought to have acted like Götz of Berlichingen, who took pen in hand as a recreation from the hardships of war. She said this to her friend Schleiermacher quite frankly and openly, and in reading other passages from her letter one realises the hearty laugh with which she would interrupt Schleiermacher's wire-drawn reflections, or make short work of Frederick's transcendental ironies, and how undoubtedly she had in both cases the advantage over both these odd men.'

Authorship was indispensable in the Schlegel circle, and so Dorothea wrote amongst other things a novel, entitled 'Florentin.' Haym says of it: 'Do not suppose for a moment that she intended to produce a pendant to "Lucinde." The slightest thought of placing herself on a level with the "divine Frederick" she would have regarded as an act of high treason. In her eyes the author of "Lucinde" was an artist; it was enough for her to assist in procuring him repose, and, as a humble worker, earn bread for him, until he could do it for himself. It was a childish triumph for her to have been the first to please the master William with some verses which she had put into the mouth of Florentin. With a beating heart and blushing face she sent the proof sheets of her novel to Schleiermacher. When at last, in the autumn of 1800, the first volume was ready, and her modest opinion remained unaltered by all her friends' praise, she began to be really ashamed of her blue-stockings, and to smile over the many red marks that her manuscript exhibited, because "the devil too often governed where the

dative or accusative should have done." The best and most delightful things in the whole book were the name of Frederick, which stood upon the title-page as editor, and his two sonnets dedicated to her. She might have been a little more vain about her humorous bantling, for, comparing novel with novel, the "Florentin" in its modest want of self-dependence is a hundred times better than the "Lucinde" with its conceited originality.'

Whilst Dorothea thus found tolerable contentment in literary work, a very unequal proportion of disagreeables fell to her share in domestic life, through Frederick Schlegel's capricious temper, and her ever-increasing disagreement with William's wife, Caroline. Upon this lady the lion's share of the blame must fall. Her evil influence was, however, soon removed by her separation from her husband, in order to marry the philosopher Schelling, who had previously chosen the daughter of her first marriage, Augusta Bohmer, but on the death of the latter returned to the mother, and (another sign of the time) was in no way divided from his friend William Schlegel on that account, but unhindered carried his wife home.

Frederick Schlegel, whose work in Jena was less fortunate than that of Dorothea, in the year 1808 finally broke loose from the restrictive social circle in that town, and travelled with Dorothea and her son Philipp Veit to Paris, where Dorothea went over to the Christian faith, and the lovers bound themselves in the bonds of marriage. Here Frederick devoted himself to his Indian studies with good results. In 1803 he published a journal, *Europa*, gave lectures, and assembled a circle around him, of which there is an account in 'Schmidt's Necrologues': 'Frederick Schlegel invited his German friends and acquaintances on Sunday evenings to tea; he would then read aloud from Shakespeare or Tieck, or in "Zerbino" and other pieces. He read unusually well, but declined all praise, asserting that Tieck alone could read really well, especially Shakespeare. This is true; but if one is to judge between them, one must confess that Tieck is first in *art* of recitation, Schlegel in *natural* manner. All went very pleasantly in this set.

Dorothea's careful loving sense enabled her to shed a cheerful influence upon their tranquil, well-ordered life. All was homely, comfortable, harmonious, and pleasing around her. Ever active and exemplary, she practised all womanly industry. It is incomprehensible how she still found time to write. She it was who, whilst her quick, clever hand made and mended clothes, knitted stockings, and busied itself on the domestic hearth, was the copyist of all her husband's writings, herself all the while bringing forth much that was beautiful and excellent. During this time she worked at the second part of "Florentin," which was never published, wrote excellent essays for the *Europa* (signed with a D.), translated and compressed "Merlin" into an exquisite epitome, carried on a tolerably extensive correspondence, found time to see the most remarkable objects of art, read all new books, occasionally attended concerts and the theatres, and enlivened the evenings by the charm of her social gifts or her beautiful reading aloud. To hear her read was a ravishing enjoyment, which however she granted only to her most intimate friends, and when Frederick was at work in his own room. To very few did she ever acknowledge herself as the authoress of the "Florentin," her poems, and other writings. She was proud that her products should appear under Schlegel's name, and always asserted that fame was a disadvantage to women, who must expect and accept every happiness and splendour from love alone. She was at once the heart, hand, and head of her husband, and to be this she was above everything herself. Indeed she stood singly on her height of loving self-sacrifice and activity, strong, cheerful, self-controlled, and sufficient for all the claims of others. Her sister Henrietta, whom Rahel speaks of as "the richest, most refined nature she had known," had a quieter charm, a more reserved gravity, was less expansive, and more observant of outward things, whilst perhaps inwardly nothing could be more passionate, sympathetic, and tender than she.'

The time in Paris was the most brilliant period in Dorothea's life, of the remaining portion of which we only record that on their return from Paris she, together with her husband and son Philipp, went over to the Roman Catholic religion at

Cologne. Later on (1818–19) she lived with her sons, who devoted themselves to painting, in Rome, and there spent much of her time in the Humboldt circle. The remainder of her varied life was spent in Frankfort-on-the-Main, where Frederick held the post of Austrian 'Legationsrath' in the 'Bundestags-gesandschaft,' and remained until his death in 1829. She died in the year 1839.

Moses Mendelssohn's second daughter, Recha, was married to the Mecklenburg 'Hof-Agent' Meyer. This union also proved unhappy, and after a time was dissolved. Recha established a boarding-school for young girls in Altona, and subsequently lived in Berlin, in close friendship with her brother Abraham. She was an intellectual, clever, but unfortunately very sickly woman.

The third daughter, Henrietta, remained unmarried, in the early years of this century lived in Vienna, then, apparently at the instance of her brother Abraham, went to Paris, where she too conducted a school, in the large garden of the Foulds' house.

Varnhagen von Ense describes her life there in the year 1810 in the following manner: 'After the varied distractions of the day, when neither Frascati nor one of the theatres was to be visited, indeed many times in the early afternoon, the garden in the Rue Richer afforded me a very sweet and comfortable resting-place. There, in the garden-house, lived Henrietta Mendelssohn, the thoughtful, highly cultured sister of Frau von Schlegel. She carried on a boarding-school for little girls. Although plain and slightly deformed, she was nevertheless attractive in appearance, at once gentle, firm, modest, and confident in her whole nature. She had a quick intelligence, wide knowledge, clear judgment, the most refined courtesy, and the choicest tact.

'She was well acquainted with the literature of Germany, France, and England, also to some extent of Italy, and spoke French and English like a native. Such qualities could not lack a noble circle of acquaintance, which, however, she sought to limit as much as possible, on account of the duties of her school. As long as Madame de Staël dared to remain in Paris, she

came very often to Fräulein Mendelssohn's; so did Benjamin Constant. I first saw Madame de Constant at her house. Madame Fould, who occupied the house in front of the garden, sometimes took her guest to visit her pleasant neighbours. Spontini sat there with us for whole evenings in the moonlight meditating on new laurels to be added to those just won by his "Vestale"—at least he seemed always very absent, and took little part in the conversation. Frau von Pobeheim brought with her the Dane Heiberg, who through Talleyrand had got a place in the foreign office, but seemed to have enough leisure to devote himself principally to literature. I also saw there for the first time Frau von Chézy and Frau von Quandt, both from Berlin. Humboldt, although then away, was well remembered. Koreff and Baron Drüberg appeared less frequently, but all the oftener came the Ritter von Eskeles, who had formerly, in Vienna, sued for the hand of the amiable *gouvernante*, and still held her in great affection.

'In this garden remarkable conversations often took place; the German and French views, though often seeming to admit of no possible accommodation, were reconciled through the happy translation which Fräulein Mendelssohn knew how to give to them, in which it was the *words* that were least of all translated. Here the contents of Madame de Staël's book upon Germany, whilst still in the press, were talked over, and in strict confidence I received the proofs, which I read with interest, not unmixed with displeasure and sometimes even anger, being one-sided and unjust enough to consider, not how the book would affect France, but how far it represented Germany in our own eyes. Now and then, when the ground was safe, political opinions were uttered without reserve; then it was remarkable how much surprising knowledge of the most secret facts and relations came from the quietest private persons—a knowledge to obtain which I have even seen diplomatists use their utmost endeavours to no purpose. The real causes of Fouché's discharge, the intrigues of that ill-famed Ouvrard, and other matters connected with them were there detailed.

'In spite of the keen interest of such society, I found a greater charm in quiet domestic evenings with Fräulein Mendels-

sohn alone, when German subjects were discussed in the German language. Her drawing-room windows were thickly covered with a vine, which at once subdued the glare of the sun and sheltered from the cool of the evening. In that green shade we used to sit for hours on the low window-seat, calling up the beloved images of our native country, our mutual friends and acquaintances, more of whom we constantly discovered to share our predilections in art and poetry; sometimes we discussed the highest and most sacred human interests.

'Fräulein Mendelssohn followed the impulse of reason above all things, rejecting all other sources of knowledge. Her love for Frau von Schlegel had received a blow from her turning Roman Catholic with her husband; she had called her sister to account for so inconceivable a step, and Frau von Schlegel in answer had earnestly begged her also to embrace the Roman Catholic faith, which demand met only with indignation and remained a forbidden subject. I had to tell her minutely what I knew of the converted couple, how I thought the affair had come to pass, and what explanation might be admitted; for it seemed as impossible to imagine Frederick Schlegel blindly accepting the Roman Catholic belief as to attribute his conversion to any worldly motive.'

In this charming home General Sebastiani became acquainted with Fräulein Mendelssohn, and confided to her the education of his daughter Fanny. Varnhagen met her again in 1814, and writes as follows:—

'I supposed that Henrietta Mendelssohn would be with her pupil, General Sebastiani's daughter, in Normandy, but unexpectedly found her here, when I was going to call upon Prince Metternich, who lived in the Hôtel Sebastiani. A great change had come over her since she entered the Sebastiani family: she had become Roman Catholic, not yet in possession of a firm belief, but full of hope to acquire it; and thus outward events, however great, were to her of secondary importance, compared to her daily inward struggles. I could not afford her any comfort; on the contrary, I only increased her restlessness; for she saw me as rich as she had now become, but without sharing her desire of becoming still richer in this direction. If

she succeeded, she foresaw that she must disavow me; at present she dared not do so, because she herself was only toiling for what I did not possess. A strange case of confusion, and rather painful, so that our intercourse could not fail to suffer from it.'

We will not decide whether or not this description of Henrietta's state of mind was accurate; one thing is sure, that she found the peace of which she was in want in her new faith, and that she lived and died a truly believing Roman Catholic, without having adopted any of the disagreeable qualities often seen in converts. Her many letters to the Mendelssohn family give ample information of her life in the Sebastiani family, where she remained till Fanny's marriage in 1824.

The life she led there may be called a 'brilliant misery.' Fanny Sebastiani was a rich heiress, and appears to have been a good-natured child, though of small ability. What self-sacrifice did Henrietta devote to the ungrateful task of making this meagre French soil fruitful by German diligence! The beginning indeed appears promising enough in a letter to her sister-in-law, Leah: 'R. will have told you that he called upon me in one of the most magnificent hotels of Paris, and saw me get out of a most beautiful carriage. All this and a great deal more is perfectly true; and I assure you, dear sisters, it is not at all a bad thing to play the fine lady. But a favourite ditty of my grandmother's will ever and again obtrude itself to me, "If it were always so!" Meanwhile I will gratefully enjoy the present time. The best of my possessions, the truly fascinating, lovely child, and her father's unbounded confidence, of which even in his letters he constantly assures me, can be taken from me by death alone.

'Do you remember the Champs Elysées and the beautiful hotels in the Faubourg St. Honoré, the gardens of which open into them? Well, I live in one of them, next door to the Emperor, who occupies the Elysée. You, dear Abraham, will remember the very house, in former times inhabited by the Marquis de Gallo. It has, however, been *revu et corrigé*; the General has had it furnished in the most magnificent and tasteful style, and added a beautiful picture gallery.

In the second story of this hotel I occupy a suite of four rooms, with a view of the Champs Elysées, and the endless gardens adjoining. All the rooms have open fires, constantly kept up, carpets, and every luxury and comfort. The servants for myself and the child are a cook, whom I brought from my house, two lady's-maids, and a man-servant; carriage and horses, by the General's express command, at my entire disposal. I have my own household, and the steward pays for the expense. The behaviour of this steward alone is an illustration of the way the General wishes his servants to treat me. Whatever I desire or think necessary is done as if by enchantment. In short, it is impossible to find a more honourable and flattering position than mine is. And I quite agree with you, dear Joseph, that this treatment and the father's good opinion is the best thing of all that has come to my share. The mother likewise overwhelms me with kind demonstrations; indeed, I fare perfectly well, and if the Almighty spare the child, and grant me, in spite of all her worldly minded surroundings, to bring her up in pious simplicity, I may truly bless my lot. It is a good thing that from early childhood I have accustomed myself to solitude, for I spend my evenings quite by myself, and what is generally called pleasure must be out of the question, as I never leave the child and will not let her get into irregular habits. This retirement, however, appears gloomy only to others, and does not frighten me; I know nothing I would not do for this child, so inexpressibly lovely is she. Your portrait, dear Abraham, hangs over my bed, and one morning I told her that you too have a little Fanny. Since then she inquires every morning after your Fanny, and says good-morning to your picture. I have never seen a child more beautiful and with more promising gifts of mind and heart. At the same time I must say that few people really enter into her as I do, although she is petted by everybody. In the few days that I have had the care of her, she has, as it were, begun to bloom. God spare her to me!'

A few years later, however, she writes to her sister-in-law: 'Fanny is truly fond of you and yours, and thinks lovingly of the children. Day by day she gets more and more beautiful and

more good and developed, although not keeping pace as regards information. How can I help that? The so-called "world" is drawing nearer and nearer with all its claims and promises, and I see it coming on like a mighty avalanche, which must destroy in one moment what I had planted and tended with such care.'

Henrietta's life went on in the vain struggle with all possible influences of that kind. In the end her prophetic words proved but too true, terribly true!

In another letter she says: 'Fanny has written in her own way to Fanny Mendelssohn; there is not much in her letter. Altogether, the only excellence of the girl is in her beauty and amiability of mind and manner, but she is entirely without talent and inclination for learning. I wish she could have your instruction, dear Leah; I am too impatient, and not systematic enough.'

Of the quiet life of Henrietta and her pupil we read: 'I know not what account to give that might interest you. This winter I have led a more secluded life than ever, not twice in company, not once in the theatre, and now I am here (in Viry, a small village near Paris), with Fanny, among flowers, blossoms, trees, and waterfalls, spending very solitary yet enjoyable days, of which, however, little may be said; for it is and will be ever true, that man alone is important to man, and that all the rest of the external world is merely a supplement.'

This monotonous life and the almost exclusive companionship of an undeveloped, indolent child—for she was that, by this time, even in the loving eyes of her governess—was agreeably interrupted in 1819, by the visit to Paris of Henrietta's favourite brother, Abraham. His society was most welcome, and she especially enjoyed a journey to Havre which he made with her while Fanny Sebastiani had gone with her father on a visit to some friends.

'I could not resist my own wishes and your husband's wonderful travelling talents, and thus an excursion of four hours, which I proposed to him, has been transformed into a journey of eight or ten days. To me, who for years and years never stirred beyond four leagues from Paris, this appears the greatest undertaking since the days of Columbus. We are actually

at Havre, have seen and admired the sea and the tide, the ships big and little, within and without, and anything else that pleased or surprised us. I am sure that Abraham wished to be able to show it to you and the children as much as I did. But never, dearest Leah, has this wish passed my lips, although so often in my thoughts. I fully understand your love for undisturbed quiet, and only regret that for the sake of it you lose so many enjoyments; most of all that you cannot profit of Abraham's travelling endowments: it is impossible to be more amiable, kind, polite, and even-tempered than my companion. I suppose that he receives your letters regularly, for away from you they appear a vital condition to him. Yesterday, on our arrival here, he found one, and he only stays till to-morrow to be quite safe of not missing your next. The day after to-morrow we return to Paris, and the memory of what I have seen will lastingly cheer me in Viry. Have you ever seen a large ship? Oh yes, I remember you were at Hamburg. So you can understand me, even if not sharing my opinion, that with all the admiration due to the human mind for beguiling, subduing, and governing the awful element, the sight of it does not really move my feeling. The smallest poem by Goethe touches me more, and makes me more proud of humanity. The sea and its waves are truly sublime, the power and awful sound of the waves when they break against the bank rouse one's innermost soul, and have more attraction to me than the squalid, restless throng and bustle on the ships. More and more my mind longs for rest—for it is toward evening.'

From 1822 Henrietta's home with the Sebastianis became less secluded, but the change proved not for the better. 'Here I sit, with the dullest, stupidest person that ever dragged through life, for a long winter-evening's *tête-à-tête*, not even Fanny at home. I do not know where to find the spirit for a letter to you, dearest Leah, and must not think of the *tant pis pour vous*. You can at least easily get rid of me—it is only a letter, you may push it aside; it does not pace up and down the room the whole evening, nor spit nor snarl at every breath, like my partner, my daily companion these two months past, and perhaps for five years to come—for he is a deputy! You see

that I suffer for the public good! But if the three constituted powers that compose representative monarchy boast of many such individuals, it becomes really serious, and I for my part should prefer Turkey or any other despotism.' And in another letter she says: 'You in your happy artistic world lead such a charming life, whilst here the inward and outward political interests form the only important ones, and are discussed with the well-known French vivacity and the greatest noise. When I say "here," I mean the circle, or indeed the house, the room, in which I live. We hear of nothing else than so-called politics, and see only a certain number of deputies, downright incarnations of tedium. There is much talking hither and thither, and I cannot help pitying Fanny, whose lovely spring days pass under such conversation. As regards myself, I shrug my shoulders as I perceive that after all these gentlemen do but gaze at their own image in the mirror of time. And these are the superior ones, for egotism is still a worse motive than vanity.' A charming feminine passage follows: 'I see from your grave exhortations and explanations that you have entirely misunderstood my banter, which properly speaking was meant for Mendelssohn alone, and, taking me for a Jacobin, ready to ring every prince's and count's neck off, defend yourself by the best reasons against my liberal views. How sorry I am not to be able to make your letter intelligible to all those around me, who blame my pretended partiality for the Ultras. To say the truth, both accusations have some foundation, for I manage as Praxiteles did with his Venus: I take what pleases me from every party, and shape out of it a sort of home policy for private use, of which policy the denial of personal merit in the higher classes certainly forms no part. Good, cultivated, intellectual people are rare, but surely up to the present time the higher classes, merely through their position in life, are a step in advance, though indeed it will sometimes happen that they do not stir from that safe point, or even watch to see who runs past them, but continue to think themselves the first.'

After such dull winters it was a real recreation to spend the summer-time in seclusion in the country. Henrietta

enjoys it with true German feeling. In 1821 she writes: 'For three weeks Fanny and I have been in the country, in the most absolute solitude, but also in absolutely undisturbed enjoyment of the most poetical spring I remember. Whatever one reads in Spanish romances of flowers, birds singing, radiant dew, and twinkling stars, we have and enjoy in all its fulness! We live in a small cheerful country-house, surrounded by fragrant plants and shady trees, not far from the Seine, on the lovely banks of which we take our walks, sometimes watching the sunset on the river itself. If, moreover, you take into account that all this while I escape many disagreeable family scenes at Paris, and that Fanny does not dislike our solitude, you will readily believe that I have hardly another wish left but to be able to share my pleasure with all of you whom I love. Not a flower do I gather without thinking of my little Rebecca;[1] the piano reminds me of the delightful treat I might have from the children; and the want of sensible intellectual conversation makes me long doubly for the parents. Fanny has a good voice; but God knows she sings by the sweat of *my* brow, for she is fundamentally unmusical, and at the same time so indolent and impatient that an excellent Italian singing-master whom I gave her would not be able to make anything of her if I were not constantly endeavouring to lend a helping hand.'

If the above-mentioned journey to Havre with her brother afforded Henrietta real recreation, the reverse may be said of a journey to Provence in 1823 with General Sebastiani and Fanny.

'Friends and bathers pitied us for undertaking a journey to the burning south at the very hottest time of year, and those who knew that country, and also my love for shady walks, quiet seats, and pure mild air, quite frightened me by their descriptions, so very unlike those of Thümmel, but like enough to Provence, which I have now become acquainted with, at the most unfavourable time. Of all the countries I know, not one has displeased me so much as Provence, with its dreamy olive-woods and leafless mulberry-trees, that stretch out their naked

[1] Abraham Mendelssohn's second daughter.

branches towards you, its bare rocks and dried-up soil, on which the pomegranate hedges seem fixed by some evil enchantment. Whilst your carriage rolls along on the dusty road and you close your jaded eyes against the glaring sun, your ears are incessantly offended by the deafening din of gigantic locusts, which swarm on both sides of the way, and actually drove me to despair, as if they were a new and augmented edition of the Pharaonic plague. Such it continued until we arrived on the Pont du Gard at Nîmes. Here I must parody St. Preux and his invocation; "J'avais une âme pour la douleur; donnez m'en une pour la félicité." I have contrived to find expressions for describing to you my dislike of the French Africa. But of the monument which has withstood so many centuries, and of the lovely wilderness where with magic art the Romans placed it, I find it impossible to say more than that words cannot describe it, and that it leaves an impression beyond all comparison. This monument alone is worth the journey. Then the amphitheatre at Nîmes, and the other Roman antiquities, fill one's soul with astonishment and admiration for that gigantic nation. But when you step from among those grave and sublime masses of stone, a painful feeling comes at once over you, not so much at the sight of the bad, poor dwellings of the present generation, but far more at the wild, brutal features of the people. Among them, well known but safe enough, live those ill-famed murderers who in our eventful times are at the call of any vindictive political party-spirit that may offer to reward them! On the Pont du Gard how different! There the mountain stream flows as it did two thousand years ago; there fig-trees and pomegranates cluster on the rocks and climb between the arcades and columns exactly as never-tiring nature will bid them do two thousand years hence.

'But I am frightened at perceiving that I myself ought to live another two thousand years to finish this letter, as on the fifth page I am only at Nîmes. Do not be alarmed. I will but just communicate to you two pieces of experience I brought home from this journey: first, that the climate in which we are born, however early we may exchange it for another, modifies our temper and obtains unconquerable power over us; the other,

that real, true, purely moral, religious, and philosophic culture, which alone deserves the name of civilisation, has its home only in the north. . . . And now I take you quickly back to Paris by way of Marseilles, where we stopped eight days, and Avignon, where the Fontaine de Vaucluse was not seen by us. We must remain the rest of the summer in Paris.'

A truly tragic epoch now approached for Henrietta. Fanny Sebastiani, a very rich heiress, had reached the age for marriage, and her faithful governess, who for years and years had devoted to her the loving care of a mother, had to admit that after all she had but been playing a part. Those words—'I see the world with its pernicious claims and promises drawing nearer and nearer, and like a mighty avalanche it will destroy in a moment what I have planted and tended with such care' —began to be realised. Henrietta providentially did not live to witness their final horrible literal fulfilment.

On the 11th of May, 1824, she writes to her brother Abraham: 'Do you remember, dear brother, that day during your last stay at Paris, when you gave me your word that you would advise and help me with all your might, and even come here, if necessary, when I should summon you? I do not yet want you to redeem your pledge, although a great change in my situation was very near occurring already. But the pleasure of seeing you all here would be very great. The purport of all this is the following: among ten suitors who since the General's return from Corsica (about two months ago) courted Fanny's hand, her father was on the verge of choosing the most brilliant and the most undeserving. How such an affair is transacted in great French families God has mercifully spared you from knowing by experience. It was a very sad time, in which our brother's[1] presence was of real comfort to me! That match is now out of the question, but in a few months it is hoped that another will be brought about, of which we may anticipate as much good for my poor Fanny as the perilous position of a rich heiress may justify us in expecting. How much the recent events, with all their exciting ingredients of intrigue, gossip, vanity, etc., have engrossed and distressed

[1] Joseph.

me, even you, dear Leah, with all your maternal feeling, will but half understand, for such evil elements are far remote from you and Mendelssohn. Fanny throughout the whole has simply shown herself brave and good. We shall in a few days go into the country, where she is to continue her accustomed way of life until her hour is come. What I shall then make up my mind to do is yet uncertain—probably go on living in the house for the first few months after her marriage, and then, please God, be once more near you.'

On the 10th of June, 1824, she writes further: 'In order to explain to you how I could delay so long announcing to you Fanny's engagement and rapidly approaching marriage with the son of the Duc de Praslin, I ought to possess the wondrous talent of our Felix, and describe to you in passionate music the *contrasto d'affetti* which for the last three months has been quite heartrending to me. Words would attempt it in vain. A few months ago, when a sad choice was very near being made, I was in the greatest anxiety about her, and deeply grieved for the melancholy fate that awaited her. But now that with God's help another union has been brought about, of which, even after the fine wedding dresses are worn out, much good may be expected, and that Fanny is most happy, I am my own torment. The question of so-called sympathising friends, "What do you intend to do?" is to me like a sharp-edged sword. That all the devotion I have lavished upon the girl these many years was really nothing but a *rôle*, and that now the curtain is to fall, and Fanny, to-morrow, to act in a new piece, with no part for me to play—I ought all along to have told myself this, and perhaps I did now and then: but how different is the reality! Thank God, my dear sister, that *your* Fanny's marriage will be but new and unmixed joy to you!

'Fanny's intended husband is the son of the Duc de Choiseul-Praslin, a young man of nineteen, who three months ago did not dream of marriage, but was preparing for the École Polytechnique, and just about to enter it. Some friends of the Sebastiani family, who also knew the duke, dreading a marriage with the son of the Duke of Fitzjames, a depraved, profligate young man, and at the same time perceiving that

no other proposals were acceptable, suggested to the duke to propose his son as Fanny's suitor. He complied at once; the young man, who had seen Fanny, was willing, and so the match was made. The wedding will be in September, and on the same day the young couple will go to an estate of his parents, which you, dear Leah, know very well from Mme. de Sévigné's letters. It is the same château which the Surintendant Fouquet built with such lavish expenditure, and where he himself was arrested during a *fête* that he gave to Louis XIV. Through the genealogy of the female branch, this immense, half-ruined, and to me most distasteful château has come down to the family de Praslin. The ornaments in the rooms are still the same. Everywhere on the walls you see squirrels (the Fouquet arms) painted, pursued by the hissing snakes so well known in the Colbert arms. The Duc de Praslin's bed-curtains are the same under which Louis XIV. slept when he spent a night at Vaux. But in spite of all these antiquities the house is decaying, and requires upwards of 20,000 francs a year to keep it from falling to pieces entirely. I know nothing more dreary than such a large building in the old French style, with its terraces, courts, cross bars, and bridges, unless it be animated by numerous inhabitants and domestics, which is not the case.

'Fanny's new family is known to be economical, careless, and slovenly; otherwise they are very worthy people, who educate their children according to the best principles, and by their unanimity, as I think, give them an excellent example. These are the reasons which make the match desirable, for the young man is neither rich, agreeable, nor clever; but as, to satisfy the parents, it had to be a duke of ancient descent and a peer of the realm, or at least an eldest son, choice was limited. Of anything else that I could wish Fanny has no idea; she was ready to marry whoever was chosen for her, but now is as much in love with her bridegroom as could be desired. She spends the whole day with him at her grandmother's, who is keeping her bed in consequence of a burn, and she is very happy. Meanwhile I am fulfilling my last duty by ordering her trousseau. How often has this occupation reminded me of you,

my dear! How many beautiful pieces of linen, made up and not made up, you probably keep in store for your Fanny! Here we have only the trouble of choosing or ordering. But what lavish expense! They might economise half of what goes to the *lingère*, and the thought of it really makes my office very disagreeable. It is, moreover, no slight responsibility; for however large the amount—20,000 francs are allowed—Fanny's wishes and the artifices of the *lingère* will always go beyond the mark.

'Dear me, how much have I chatted about this one subject! But if I filled sheets I could not tell you how sad I am.'

She further writes about the bridegroom, who was then only nineteen years old: 'They have now given the young man all the teachers he ought to have had before, and he is studying all at once and together—History, Greek, Latin, German, Law. What do you think of this? And yet the General is right in wishing to retrieve as much as possible what has been neglected. But I believe, if you wanted such knowledge from your future son-in-law, you would desire that he brought it with him as a dowry.'

The end proved worthy of this beginning. The old desolate château and the grandmother ill of her wounds formed a dreary prologue—still darker when one knows the sequel. The Duc de Praslin murdered his wife, the unhappy Fanny, in the year 1847, and escaped a felon's death only by suicide. At the time the trial caused immense excitement, and contributed considerably to deprive the government of Louis Philippe of its last remains of popularity, as the Duke had been a favourite at court, and the government was accused of having abetted the suicide.

Until now we have only considered those passages from Henrietta's letters which treat of her own affairs. But her letters are full of other interesting details; and the activity of her mind shows itself by the animated descriptions of persons and events. Unhappily it was then very dangerous to speak openly in letters, especially for a German living in Paris and the governess of the daughter of a general in the service of Napoleon. Thus up to 1815 we find hardly a word about his-

torical events; but when the cannon of the allies sent their thunder from Montmartre, Henrietta felt that the fetters were about to fall, and she gives her sister-in-law the following spirited description of the state of Paris during the battle:—

'The thunder of the cannon has pierced the black, heavy clouds, and I will make use of the clear moment before they gather again.

'On the 10th of July I received your letter of the 26th of April: it might have been from another century, for the world and events now turn with such incredible quickness that two months may well be thus considered. Europe is once more in France. The affair has been well and speedily settled; but if there is room left for France in Europe, this glorious campaign may have no lasting consequence but unutterable misery. However, that will be the business of the new congress. It seems that my German acquaintances have excommunicated me too: I see no one of my many countrymen now in Paris. On the other hand I enjoy the pleasure of hearing all the complaints about *vos Prussiens*, who really seem to act as avengers, and pillage, burn, and murder as if they had learnt it out of some legend of the Middle Ages. But what shocks the people here most appears to be their want of politeness. Several times already I have heard them say: "Les soldats des autres nations prennent, mais poliment; ce n'est pas comme ces Prussiens!" Meanwhile I had the pleasure to converse with a regiment of brown hussars, who camped before our garden for about a week, and was delighted with the healthy straightforwardness and honesty I found in many of them. I reproached them that they had imitated the robbery of the French, whilst the English troops show themselves so noble and modest; and one of them, decorated with the iron cross, answered, "They hate us in France, whatever we do, so it does not matter."

'You will be no more surprised than I am, dear Abraham, to hear how the country round Paris is treated, but you will be sorry for the miserable end of this *charming sinner*. St. Denis, Montmorency, St. Cloud, Sèvres, Sçeaux, Malmaison, are ruined for years, and Paris has a second time been spared as by a miracle, whilst the most desperate fighting was going on close

by. Since you have had similar experience, you can fancy what days of anguish I have seen; but things lately bore a more terrible stamp than anything you ever had in Germany, for you were united, and here the outbreak of the most dreadful civil war was daily expected, whilst the foreign armies were at the gates, which only opened to admit the crowds of wounded who every hour testified to the approaching danger. During many nights the dregs of the population of the suburbs, under the name of *fédérés*, went through the streets with furious yells, and but for the truly heroic conduct of the Garde Nationale we should have been lost. But as everything, however dreadful, takes the form of gaiety in Paris, it happened that during those days of agony the theatres and other public places were more frequented than at other times. Elegant ladies in their carriages approached the hostile camp as near as possible, and the rows of chairs, on which ladies and gentlemen were lazily lounging, extended very nearly as far as the English camp at Neuilly. They thought this stupid carelessness the best way of showing their attachment to the king.

'Something like that happened to myself, though I do not possess that lightness of temper. I was sitting one evening with the child in the Tuileries, chatting with Madame Brochay, whilst all Paris was in the most fearful commotion; but I only found it out after I reached home, and heard a horrible tumult and the firing of guns in the streets and the Champs Elysées. The next day I read in the papers that the evening before a conspiracy to blow up Paris had been discovered—the second time within fifteen months that we have escaped such a *salto mortale*.'[1]

In the country Henrietta was for some years a near neighbour of Davoust, about whom she writes as follows: 'I must tell

[1] We might mention as a justification of the Prussians—if there was a difference at all between the conduct of the English and Prussian armies—that the English had not, like us, had the enemy in their own country. The resentment of a man who has had his fields devastated, his cattle driven away, his farm burnt down, his wife and daughters abused, when he finds himself able to take his revenge, is of course greater than that of another who has never seen such things.

you as a curiosity that this dreadful Davoust, the terror of the north, the author of such unutterable misery, is at home the meekest of men. He has not the courage to give any orders to the lowest servant without the consent of his lady, who governs the household as sternly as he used to govern the conquered countries.' And in another letter we find: 'Marshal Davoust, his wife, who is the real mistress of the house, and their children are with us every day. When he first heard my name, he asked General S., who happened to be with us, whether I had any relations at Hamburg, as he had known very worthy people of the same name in that place. Nearly all his servants are Germans; his daughters are learning German with real earnestness, and he always eagerly requests me to tell him whether I think they get on. I cannot understand the political life of this man when I see him at home and with his children. He is as good a father as Abraham, joins in all their games with true ardour, and his eldest daughter, a girl of fourteen, who is very much like him, is the gentlest creature I know. I can explain the atrocities committed at Hamburg under his government only in one way. He seems to be very dull and ignorant. He is without influence in his own house, and I suppose was the same as commander: some miscreant acted in his place. But this is, of course, all the same to the poor oppressed people, and he is even more guilty for having allowed such atrocious deeds to happen.'

As we mentioned before, Henrietta had embraced the Roman faith, and we have seen even Dorothea change her religion twice, and at last turn Roman Catholic. The period was favourable to such changes of mind and creed. One of the sisters of William Hensel, who died only lately, Louise Hensel, well known as the author of religious poetry, had also, although the daughter of a Protestant clergyman, become a Roman Catholic. Marianne Saaling, also belonging to the nearest friends of the Mendelssohns, and about whom we shall speak afterwards, is another instance.

As is the rule with converts, Henrietta was devotedly attached to the religion she had embraced.

The following introductory words of her last will bear testi-

mony to the beautiful spirit of mutual tolerance which the family showed in such affairs.

'As in these words I speak for the last time to my dear relations, I hereby thank them for all the aid and friendship they have shown me during my life, and especially for having in every way tolerated the exercise of my religion, and never having shown any hatred towards it. Therefore I solely attribute it to myself if God has not thought me worthy of the grace of converting my brothers and sisters to the true faith, the Roman Catholic. May the Lord Jesus Christ grant my prayers and inspire them all with the light of His grace! Amen.' Then follow the dispositions about her little fortune and many keepsakes, and the will concludes: 'I beg my brothers, or those relations who will open this my last will, to grant me the funeral service of the Roman Catholic Church, and to let me be buried early in the morning as quietly and simply as possible. On my tombstone I should wish the name, Maria Henrietta Mendelssohn, and on the cross I request to be erected on my grave, the words "Redemisti me, Deus, Deus Veritatis." May the Lord be with me in my last hour, and may He give His blessing to all my dear relations in life as in death!'

After the marriage of Fanny Sebastiani, Henrietta returned to Berlin, and lived in close relations with the family of her brother, Abraham Mendelssohn Bartholdy, who with his eldest son Felix came to fetch her from Paris. She died on November 9, 1831, as her niece Fanny Hensel writes in her journal, 'With such tranquillity, such a clear consciousness, and such solicitude for others, to the last moment, that her death was the crown to her beautiful life.'

ABRAHAM MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY.

ABRAHAM MENDELSSOHN,[1] the second son of Moses, was destined to add a new and even more brilliant lustre to the name by his son Felix. He himself expressed this by the modest humorous words, 'Formerly I was the son of my father, and now I am the father of my son.' These words show the character of the man. It is true that he stands between the firm adherence to Judaism of Moses and the sincere Christian faith of Felix and Fanny, between the philosophic views of his father and the æsthetic views of his children; but he was himself a harmonious, independent, vigorous character, and had nothing of the epigon in him.

We know little of his youth down to the beginning of the century. In the year 1803 he occupied the office of a cashier in the counting-house of Messrs. Fould, at Paris. Here he probably often talked about his future prospects with his sister Henrietta, in her cosy arbour in the Rue Richer, and in their conversation she very likely often mentioned her intimate friend Leah or Lilla Salomon[2] as a suitable wife for her brother. Leah's family enjoyed an agreeable social position in Berlin. G. Merkel, who was intimately acquainted with the Salomon family, and kept up a lively correspondence with Leah, after her death in 1842 restored some of the letters to her family, and at the same time gave the following description of her youth:—

Leah Salomon. That was her maiden name. Her elder brother had adopted the name of Bartholdy, after the former proprietor of the garden belonging to the family.[3] Leah was

[1] Born December 11, 1776. [2] Born March 26, 1777.

[3] This garden, situated on the Spree in the Köpenick Street, subsequently belonged to Abraham Mendelssohn, and will, by-and-by, be often mentioned as 'the farm,' or the 'Meierei.'

not handsome, but her eloquent black eyes, her sylph-like figure, her gentle, modest behaviour, and the power of her lively conversation, full of accurate judgment and striking but never malicious wit, made her most attractive. She was acquainted with every branch of fashionable information; she played and sang with expression and grace, but seldom, and only for her friends; she drew exquisitely; she spoke and read French, English, Italian, and—secretly—Homer, in the original language. Secretly! How would others have boasted of their knowledge! Her taste, formed by the classic authors of so many languages, was exact and refined, but she seldom ventured to pass a judgment. A most speaking trait of her character was this: by the legacy of some relation she was in possession of a considerable fortune, but her dress was always as simple as it was elegant, whilst she allowed her mother, who was not nearly so rich, a liberal income, and carefully kept house for her. The following letters in their noble simplicity give a finishing touch to her portrait, which after these forty years is still before my mind's eye.

Berlin: July 2, 1799.

After four weeks' illness my dear grandfather died. Your feeling heart needs no explanation why I did not answer you then. Continual suspense and fear, violent emotions during his last unhappy days, the awful impression made upon my mind by the slow extinction of his strength, then the terrible aspect of death, the general sorrow, and my own grief in the midst of the mourning of all the others, my anxiety about my dear mother, who is deeply afflicted—all this produced a state of mind rendering all communication impossible. I also remembered that you do not like 'sweet melancholy,' and that only my most intimate and indulgent friends can bear with me in this mood. I imagined I heard you exclaim 'Vive la joie!' as a kind of inharmonious echo to my sad emotions; and thus, what otherwise would appear unaccountable and strange to you and me, is quite comprehensible and natural.

At present only quiet loving remembrance softly touches my mind. The mild season, the enjoyment of healthy free air,

a delightful life in the most lovely garden, social pleasures, the important office of housekeeper, the serious duty of doing the honours in our little reunions, agreeable occupations, the charming, undisturbed aspect of beautiful nature, fill my heart with the purest pleasure, indeed with thorough happiness. I hope you will keep your promise and visit us in our little paradise this autumn. But the name 'paradise' must not make you expect wonders. The flat, meagre soil of Brandenburg, its entire want of anything romantic, may tell you that art alone has to supply the richness and greatness of beautiful nature. Happily good taste has prevented a feeble imitation of English parks, grottoes, lilliputian rocks, and new ruins (as in your beloved Monbijou). Imagine the thickest, coolest shade of venerable chestnuts, limes, and sycamores; lofty arched avenues, pleasant seats, and pretty arbours, abundant gifts of Flora and Pomona, kitchen-plants, hothouses, certainly interesting as proofs of industry and diligence, and you have an exact idea of our summer residence. Add a comfortable little country house, buried in vines, mulberry-, and peach-trees, in which I occupy a neat but very simple little room with my piano, bookcase, and desk as furniture, and the portrait of my Henrietta and fresh flowers as only ornament, space and arrangement not for grand society but for the small circle of a few friends, the whole quiet, cheerful, and secluded.

Pardon my chattering about such unimportant things, but I am surrounded in this garden by the most cherished remembrances. Under these trees, planted and cultivated with real love by my dear grandfather, I have dreamt the rosy dreams of childhood; every path, every spot is sacred and interesting to me, in sweet remembrance of past times. Here my feelings developed, here my youthful mind ripened, and the half-slumbering thoughts of my soul took definite form in this charming solitude; here I read my favourite poets with a higher enjoyment, here I learned to understand and appreciate the advocates of liberty, justice, and truth; and I even fancy that the weak notes my unskilled fingers produce are here more melodious and pure. Thus my imagination surrounds everything here with higher splendour, and you must pardon the

enthusiasm of a foolish girl. And have not you yourself at Sansouci felt that what one puts into the objects around one, and the beauty which one's imagination gives them, is generally worth more, and gives a higher pleasure than can be got from a cool examination?

True to your custom, you have again broken your word to our friend Itzig. I hear pretty often from him. He has long ago given up all hope of seeing you at Wittenberg. He remains faithful to his good resolutions, and is working hard. His only recreation consists in walking, writing poetry, reading good books, and intercourse with the numerous inreresting strangers arriving at his hotel. I rejoice to see him ripen into early honourable manhood by his own independence and firmness. I am indeed very happy to have such true and constant friends, and to feel that many of my early attachments grow stronger and firmer every year.

His old friend, my eldest brother, still lives at Mayence; the doings of the French and the close investigations they have established are very interesting for him. Sometimes he strolls through the lovely environs, and only a short time ago he went down the Rhine as far as Coblenz and Bonn with Professor Kiesewetter, whom he met by chance at Mayence. The latter arrived here a few days ago, and has given us very satisfactory news of my brother's way of living and the society he cultivates.

A few weeks ago I made the acquaintance of a countryman of yours, and was very much pleased to find out that he had been your schoolfellow. His name is Pölchau, and he has already returned to his residence at Hamburg. A gentle, amiable man; his prepossessing face has an expression of good-nature, which gained him the confidence and sympathy of all. I had been told that his melancholy appearance was the consequence of an unhappy attachment. You can fancy how this idea moved my imagination, how sincerely I sympathised with him, and how I found him even a thousand times more interesting when I believed that he suffered from an excess of tenderness and faithfulness. He is passionately fond of music, and has the finest voice I have heard for a long time. His choice of

songs seems to suit his character entirely: the playful French manner and the ornamental many-coloured music of the Italians offend his simple taste; but with what true enthusiasm and inimitable expression did he sing the appropriate melodies of Reichardt and Zelter to Goethe's divine verses, and the enchanting, sweet music of Graun! It was a real pleasure to see such pure unfeigned enthusiasm and such healthy and candid feeling for everything true art produces.

Mentioning true and genuine art reminds me of asking you for your opinion of 'Wallenstein's Death.' I hope it has reconciled you to the 'Piccolomini,' which, if I am not mistaken, did not satisfy you. According to my imperfect notions, it is a masterpiece. The abundance of thought, the charm of expression, the noble simplicity and poetical beauty, added to the interesting subject, will not be equalled nor even imitated for a long time. But even if you were bent on blaming everything, I know that your critical eye would at least approve of Thekla. This sublime, heavenly character has shown itself to you in the most pleasant form, and the most sympathetic to your heart. (Surely you have seen 'Wallenstein' acted at Weimar?) You could not resist this angel of light and human greatness! I am eagerly looking forward to seeing it on the stage; I have read it attentively, and am curious to know what effect the aspect of those divine beings, living and real, and the charm of the actual representation, will have upon me.

But now to speak of one of your favourites. What do they say at Weimar, the residence of Genius and Criticism, about Brückmann's Elegies? Without being prejudiced in his favour, I think them very beautiful, especially the one to Klopstock, which is distinguished by a bolder, more fiery strain from the plaintive, soft tone of the others. Please give me your opinion; I think I know what it will be, but I have such an earnest desire not to be partial that your judgment, full of severity, wit, and subtlety, will be very useful to me, along with my friendly sympathy.

Do you see Kotzebue? and how do you like him? As he is well acquainted with my friend Henrietta, I take an interest in him, and should like to know something about the *man*,

although the *writer* is very indifferent to me. How does the great herd—assembly, I mean—of authors live at Weimar? In peace, or at war? For candidly you must own that all you learned gentlemen are a queer, quarrelsome set. Please excuse my bluntness. And what is the newest subject of your pen—deep policy, serious history, or playful love? Are you worshipping a solemn Muse or the smiling Graces and Cupids? And have you given up your dreadful idea of writing about the Jews? Only tell me what god or goddess could reign over that subject. I cannot find one—I know too little of mythology, and the inhabitants of Parnassus, Helicon, and Pindus. Perhaps you think that you have hitherto done all your works without the influence of such higher powers. But believe the word of one of the uninitiated; invisibly and imperceptibly the glorious God of Inspiration has been near you. Take heed lest you scare away your silent genius!

But I will no longer fatigue your patience. Many greetings from all my family (always of course excepting the aristocrat), and forgive a humble and perhaps over-bold request for a generous and speedy answer. LEAH SALOMON.

Berlin: August 26, 1799.

. . . How lucky it was that my letter should reach you, in such delightful company, and such a beautiful place! It did not disturb your enjoyment of the agreeable conversation and of the lovely nature; only some of those pleasant impressions followed it, when you read it afterwards in solitude, and made you regard it with a favourable eye. Why cannot I assure a similar fate to these sheets? If I could command the amiable protectors of woods, meadows, and waters, you would be surrounded by all imaginable pleasure-woods, softly gliding brooks, and blooming meadows, like some fairy-prince or idyllic shepherd, and whilst you were catching butterflies in the grass, a light zephyr or, better still, a beautiful nymph would give you my letter. But then I am afraid your mind would be otherwise occupied, and so we had better content ourselves with the common letter-post.

I certainly did not give you the simple description of my

Lea Mendelssohn Bartholdy

beloved garden to have it compared to your Tibur, and I have told you why its venerable arbours are so dear to my heart and memory. I should not even wonder if you found it intolerable, and can already fancy you laughing at the commonplace symmetry, where

> Grove nods to grove, each alley has its brother

But you shall not make me like it less, much as I shall relish your jokes about it; for true gratitude and the remembrance of many scenes of my youth make it interesting for me. I also acknowledge that our dull monotony can hardly please you, who have seen happier countries; but with my dreary native soil a quiet, contented mind has been given me, imaginative enough to dream of something more beautiful, yet thoroughly enjoying all the simple charms of my surroundings. Flowers shed their lustre even here, trees spread their picturesque branches, and bright green banks are reflected in the clear waves. I imagine my Arcadia, and am very happy in my narrow mediocrity. But you must not think me insensible to a richer, nobler nature! Even the description of milder climes fills me with delight, and the ideal of all my wishes is to travel through such lovely countries. Had I been born in Italy, Switzerland, or the South of France, I am inclined to believe I should have been a poetess of the slow, descriptive kind. I really fancy spring would have inspired me there, and poor Echo would have had to repeat my songs of joy or of woe.

Itzig has finished his studies at Wittenberg, and has been here several weeks already. But whatever will you say when I inform you of his conversion to the Christian faith? Luther's birthplace and the scene sanctified by his work have influenced him. He could not resist the desire to be baptized under the image of this great man, and to be in some sort protected by him; and by this step towards the salvation of his soul he has obtained the worldly advantage of soon getting a place in his profession. Unfortunately this place will probably be one in Poland, and I am doubtful whether the difficulties attending the management of affairs in that country will leave him perseverance and patience enough to remain true to what he

has chosen. I cannot tell you how sincerely this is my wish; for most converts have by their bad, or at least weak, conduct, caused their step to be regarded with a kind of contempt, even by those whose intentions are good. Now if some one stood forth who, by a spotless character, firmness, and worldly wisdom in his behaviour (according to which, alas! most judgments are formed), gave an honourable example, a great part of that well-founded prejudice would vanish. How I wish we could do without this hypocrisy; but the desire for a higher sphere of action than that of a merchant, or a thousand tender ties in which young people become entangled by intercourse with members of other religions, leaves no other way open. I believe I never heard your opinion on this subject, and it is very interesting and important to me. Write to me about it, and tell me how you are going to treat the matter in your book.

Upon the whole, instead of your truly French gallant piece of witticism, I should have liked you to give me honest German information about your book. I prefer facts to phrases; but if you insist on using flattery, I will be good-natured enough to tell you what kind I like best: it is the language of communicative cordiality, of familiar kindness, of that condescending information which a reflecting mind deigns to give to insignificant mortals about his plans and ideas—*ce n'est pas le ton des aimables riens, des fleurettes spirituelles, des tournures ingénieuses.* I was obliged to tell you that in French, because I think it more fit to express my thought, and because I almost fancy myself a Parisian every time I think of an exaggerated compliment.

Now that I am scolding I must reproach you about your mysterious suspicion. Just as I was very eager to read a few particulars about Kotzebue—after the first word you interrupt your account by the wicked remark, 'But stop, you have not yet answered my request about the non-communicating of my letter.' Know then, most anxious sir, that there are many things of which I am silent because they are matter-of-course. Clever people guess most things, and, though deception be everywhere, a woman's character at least does not deceive, since her indiscretion and talkativeness are apparent on the surface,

and they at least never hide themselves. I cannot understand, therefore, how it escaped you that I am discretion personified, and am very much inclined to attribute to your wickedness the intention of forcing this confession on me. My amiable, blushing modesty objects to it very much. But do not believe that I want to intrude upon your secrecy: I never asked you about the degree of your intimacy with Kotzebue, but for your *opinion* of him, and I generally give my opinion so candidly that I thought I might ask for yours without appearing indiscreet.

Poor Pölchau! *Vous l'avez bien arrangé!* But I really was somewhat mistaken about his romantic love, and I have since heard that his melancholy is partly the consequence of the untimely death of his brother. I love him even the more, for if a powerful passion be interesting, the quiet, longing fondness of a brother is very touching and affecting. You ask for my opinion about the *constancy of a man's love-sickness.* That is rather a puzzling question for me who have no routine whatever in the affairs of the heart. The violent, changeable character of men gives little opportunity for edifying or consolatory observations upon this subject, and for one Werther and one Pölchau there exist a hundred thousand fickle ones, who call the fire of the moment passion. Of that sacred and everlasting flame they see only the reflection, which, growing weaker and weaker, leaves them but the name of a feeling, the true signification of which remains to them a mystery.

Pray do not give me the *public* as an authority against the merits of 'Wallenstein.' Real art is certainly felt and understood only by the few refined minds; and the circumstance that a commonplace, tragi-comic family quarrel by the natural pen of Iffland is more likely to attract the multitude than the grand heroes of Schiller, surely does not prove the superiority of Iffland's genius. Your fine sense of the beauties of art could not draw this conclusion! I cannot, it is true, speak of the effect on the stage, as I have only read 'Wallenstein,' but liveliness of action seems not to be wanting, and if the hero is powerless against his fate it is in consequence of his own superstition, which lets him see the approaching catastrophe

only when it is too late. The exquisite, clever acting of Fleck will probably do more to reconcile you with the unhappy hero than all I can say for him, therefore you must see 'Wallenstein' here, and learn to appreciate Thekla by the acting of lovely Mademoiselle Fleck, who is said to be the personification of tender feeling and true womanly love in that part.

I really cannot guess which lines in Allwill you have read two hundred times, and it would be very kind if you came in aid of my want of penetration. I envy your good fortune in being so near Wieland, and this envious feeling has become strengthened since I read his delightful 'Agathodæmon.' What a desirable privilege to enjoy such activity and power of mind in old age, after such a glorious life, and to preserve the same excellence even in his latest works! I was very glad to hear the other day that he still unites the animating warmth of the heart and the love of beauty with his everlasting youthfulness of fancy. He has paid the amiable Sophie Brentano a compliment as elegant and exquisite as it was finely expressed. But surely you know that angel, and would make me most happy by telling me something about her. I have never seen her, and yet I love her to adoration. I only know her from the description of our mutual friend Henrietta, and from letters. The talent of letter-writing is generally attributed to all women; but if they too often deserve this praise only by their easy, flowing style, there are many gradations and more beautiful specialties which Sophie possesses in the highest degree. I have never seen charming delicacy of feeling, exquisite culture, loving devotion, and inimitable gracefulness of expression so perfectly combined: she is unparalleled. They say she is equally charming and delightful in conversation and intercourse. Kind nature, in forming such a creature, has liberally given everything—soul, wit, feeling, amiability, education, and charm. I cannot describe how I long to see her, and how the sight of so many exquisite qualities combined would delight me. If she still happens to be at Weimar, remember me to her, and, if you can, induce her to come here. The journey is short, and for her grandmother at least there is an object of attraction here, the Countess Genlis, in whom she

takes the highest interest. Madame de Genlis lives near our garden, and we see her daily. This mutual acquaintance could give us the best opportunity of meeting. With what enthusiasm for Sophie has my dear Henrietta inspired me! She used to overflow with admiration, joy, and emotion when she told me about her; and her love was not a blind, girlish inclination, but the clearest conviction of a beautiful nature, an excellent character, and a cultured mind. You must tell me much, very much, about her, I beg and entreat you! I cannot sufficiently describe the interest I take in her, and if you know her you must partake of my enthusiastic admiration.

Arland has written, and wishes to be kindly remembered to you. He is staying at Freienwalde, and the baths and beautiful nature seem to strengthen him. His life, so full of privations, a chain of filial duties and constant sacrifices, is truly exemplary and admirable. One spark of strength and generosity may kindle in every breast, but the constancy, the continued efforts which enthusiasm engenders and firm assiduity executes, are rare and grand. How I wish I could give him the means of beginning a more beautiful life according to his own taste!'

Abraham Mendelssohn seems to have met this young woman and fallen in love with her on the journey from Paris to Berlin. He first stipulated that she should live with him in Paris, because he could not bear Berlin, whilst the girl's mother would not hear of her marrying a 'clerk.' Henrietta writes about it to her brother:—

'I need not tell you how heartily I join in your hopes of a happy result, but I must confess that it appears to me nearly impossible that you should succeed under your conditions. And yet, dear brother, this marriage would be the greatest blessing to you in every respect, and I cannot but entreat you not to be too hasty, and not to sacrifice too much to your position, which, though certainly advantageous now, may change in future times.

'I feel as if I were twenty years older than you, and could tell you from my own experience that at your age people often rashly overlook their own happiness, even when they find it in their path; they always expect everything exactly to suit their

own wishes, and then, while they are hesitating, their happiness is gone and lost for ever! I hope to read in your next letter that you have already seen Lilla; and the oftener you speak to her, the more you will observe how seldom, if ever, you can find a woman like her. I do not therefore approve of your dislike of Berlin having so great an influence on this most important decision. I could not help charging you with juvenile want of consideration when I read in your letter, "Je préférerais manger du pain sec à Paris!" "Du pain sec" is a very good thing, especially here, where it is so white; but I always fear that if you continue to work for others without the means of getting on, and notwithstanding your great talents are always dependent on caprice and obstinacy, we know it might become "du pain amer," and I pray God that you may not have to repent afterwards of your present refusal.'

These entreaties, with the voice of his own heart, had their result. Abraham gave up his place at Paris, entered into partnership with his brother Joseph, and married Leah Salomon. The young couple settled at Hamburg, and a letter from the bride gives an animated description of the first days of their married life:—

'You want to know, dearest sister, how I get on in my home and domestic arrangements. I must confess that as yet there is no more order than in the rooms of the most careless student, for we cannot think of neat little rooms, housekeeping, and comforts in the Berlin style; and when I look at my *remue-ménage* I can hardly believe that I am really married, the married state being generally associated with the possession of a quantity of saucepans, dishes, chandeliers, looking-glasses, and mahogany furniture. All these delightful luxuries are still wanting in my *chez moi*. But if mamma's and your sense of order pardon me, I shall not yield to care, and find consolation in the prospect that busy Martha will not long do without the melodious clinking of keys. To-morrow will be our first attempt at a dinner in our own little home; the French pastry-cook will furnish it. I cannot yet procure any household goods, because there is no room for them, and the chaos will only be put in order when we leave Hamburg for the

country. A pretty little cottage with a balcony!!! situated on the Elbe close to the Neumühlen, has been offered to us, and we are going to see it. On the evening of our arrival I indulged not only in opening my little box from Paris but also in trying on my two state dresses. Heavenly! but only fit to be worn at the court of the Emperor Napoleon. The richest, glossiest, softest chamois-satin robe, and the most delicate white and pink figured, exquisitely made up and trimmed. Mendelssohn was in real enthusiasm. But I maintain that such ethereal tints are only fit for Miss Hebe. Tell our ladies, for their comfort, that the "Medicis" is nothing but an improved "Stuart," and that the collar of the Scotch queen is just as fashionable as that of the French.'

Abraham and Leah Mendelssohn lived in Hamburg till 1811, and three children were born in that place: Fanny, the eldest, on November 14, 1805 (the father, in announcing the birth to his mother-in-law, adds, 'Leah says that the child has Bach-fugue fingers'—a prophecy which proved to be true); Felix, on February 3, 1809; and Rebecca, on April 11, 1811. They bought the country-house with the balcony the possession of which the bride anticipated with such pleasure. Here the young couple spent the first beautiful years of their exceptionally happy married life; and when, long, long years afterwards—namely, in 1833—Abraham saw his son Felix a celebrated, adored artist, the able conductor of the great Düsseldorf music-festival, and withal felt himself the venerated father of a devotedly affectionate son, he wrote to his wife with a gratitude we can well understand: 'Dear wife, this young man gives us much joy, and I sometimes think, Three cheers for Marten's Mill!' That was the name of the Hamburg cottage, and the father thought of the happy time of his own youth, when his first son was born, who now realised the highest and proudest expectations.

We have already mentioned that the family had to leave Hamburg for Berlin during the French occupation. The state of things was very sad. In Hamburg they had suffered under the oppressions of Davoust, and the fate of Berlin during the

first years of their stay there was not much better. Then came the rising of 1813. Notwithstanding his predilection for France, Abraham sided fully and wholly with the Germans, and at his own cost equipped several volunteers. His election as councillor of the town—Stadtrath—shows that his services were acknowledged.

In the year 1813, on the 30th of October, the last child, Paul, was born.

Fanny and Felix showed a decided talent for music, even in their earliest youth. At first their mother taught them, afterwards L. Berger, and lastly Zelter, who was frequently at the house as a friend, and of whose originality and bluntness some striking traits have been preserved in the family traditions. Once a very shy young lady was introduced to him to have her voice examined. He encouraged the trembling girl by the words, 'Sing away, I can bear as much as anybody else.' Thus cheered she began, but was instantly interrupted by Zelter with the words, 'Don't open your mouth in that manner!' Of course the poor girl lost all control over herself, and after a truly 'severe trial' she burst into tears. Zelter was sorry for this, and comforted her: 'Now don't cry, dear child; I really meant no harm, but with your personal appearance you ought not to open your mouth like that.' In a conversation about genius and its limits, Zelter, to illustrate his assertion that nothing was impossible to genius, went so far as to say, 'Nonsense, a genius can curl the bristles of a pig.' At table he used to say, 'As long as I have water, I decline beer and drink wine.'

Abraham's method of education was severe—in some things showing the old Jewish despotism. 'Faithful and obedient till death' was the admonition he gave his daughter Fanny on the day of her confirmation. Her confirmation is a subject which we must dwell upon. Of Moses's children, Dorothea and Henrietta embraced the Roman Catholic faith, as already mentioned. The sons remained Jews. But Abraham saw that this was only a question of time, and resolved that his children should be educated in the Christian Protestant faith. It is to be supposed that he consulted his brother-in-law, who had become a Christian and had adopted the name of Bartholdy; for in a

letter, of which unfortunately we only possess fragments, he writes: 'You say *you owe it to the memory of your father*; but do you think you have done something bad in giving your children the religion which appears to you to be the best? It is the justest homage you or any of us could pay to the efforts of your father to promote true light and knowledge, and he would have acted like you for his children, and perhaps like me for himself. You may remain faithful to an oppressed, persecuted religion, you may leave it to your children as a prospect of life-long martyrdom, as long as you believe it to be absolute truth. But when you have ceased to believe that, it is barbarism. I advise you to adopt the name of Mendelssohn Bartholdy as a distinction from the other Mendelssohns. At the same time, you would please me very much, because it would be the means of preserving my memory in the family. Thus you would gain your point, without doing anything unusual, for in France and elsewhere it is the custom to add the name of one's wife's relations as a distinction.' Abraham followed this advice on all points.

So the children were brought up as Christians, secretly at first, not to hurt the feeling of their Jewish grandparents, especially old Madame Salomon. This lady was very orthodox, and when her son Bartholdy was converted she cursed him and cast him off. Fanny was a great favourite with her grandmother, and often went to see her and to play to her. One day when she had played exquisitely well, the old woman told her to choose anything she liked as a reward. Fanny said, 'Forgive Uncle Bartholdy'; and the grandmother, touched by the child's unexpected request, instead of a wish for a new bonnet or some other piece of finery, as she had probably expected, was really reconciled to her son—'for Fanny's sake,' as she wrote to him. Thence originated a close friendship between uncle and niece, and a long correspondence.

He was a remarkable man, an accomplished art-critic, and universally cultivated. In his youth he led an unsettled life. We have seen in one of Leah's letters that towards the end of the last century he lived at Mayence; he afterwards attached himself to Hardenberg. Varnhagen met him often in Vienna

and Paris; in later times he lived at Rome as Prussian consul-general, and, at a period when few people had a taste in that direction, bestowed all his slender means upon beautiful art-collections. We shall meet him again in the course of our narative.

The following few letters of Abraham Mendelssohn's to his children, of different dates, will show what an excellent educator he was.

Hamburg: October 29, 1817.

Your letters, dear children, have afforded me very great pleasure. I should write to each of you separately, if I were not coming home in such a short time, and I hope you will prefer myself to a letter.

You, my dear little Rebecca, have written a very nice letter, and I am glad you had pity on the poor squirrel and took it into the room. If you have the same disagreeable weather we have here, not even an elephant could have stayed out of doors. But what has mother said about it? Be a good girl, industrious and obedient, for I bring something very nice for you, which you must first deserve.

You, dear Fanny, have written your first letter very nicely; the second, however, was a little hasty. It does you credit, that you do not like B.'s bad jokes; I do not approve of them either, and it is wicked to try to make people laugh at what is beautiful and good. Unfortunately conversation and life in society is almost entirely limited to this pursuit—not a laudable one, indeed; and the golden rule will ever hold good, to be silent rather than say anything unseemly.

About you, dear Felix, your mother writes as yet with satisfaction, and I am very glad of it, and hope to find a faithful and pleasing diary. Mind my maxim, 'True and obedient!' You cannot be anything better, if you follow it, and if not you can be nothing worse. Your letters have given me pleasure, but in the second I found some traces of carelessness, which I will point out to you when I come home. You must endeavour to speak better, then you will also write better.

Your letters, my dear little king of the Moors, also called

Paul Hermann, were the best of all, without a single mistake, and beautifully short. I praise you in good earnest for your conduct, of which mother, Rebecca, and Fanny give such a charming account. I wonder where I shall get the goats for you?

To see you all again will be a very great pleasure for me. I send you my love.

Amsterdam: April 5, 1819.

Of your two letters, my dear Fanny, the second, with your tragi-comic complaints of having nothing to write about, was more correctly and carefully written than the first, in which you only speak about the theatre. You are now old enough to find subjects to write to me about, not only in the daily events, but also in your thoughts. I should like to hear now and then what ideas your occupations awaken in you. As long as I was at home, for instance, mother told me much about your lessons with the clergyman. You should do that yourself now; so that I may see by your letters, now that I cannot personally watch it, what influence his teaching has on your heart and mind. Above all, let it be that of more and more strengthening your endeavour to please your loving and revered mother, and to arrive through obedience at love, through order and discipline at freedom and happiness. That is the best way of thanking and worshipping the Creator, the Maker of us *all.* There are in all religions only one God, one virtue, one truth, one happiness. You will find all this, if you follow the voice of your heart; live so that it be ever in harmony with the voice of your reason.

You know from my letters to mother how I get on. Daily and hourly do I think of you in true affection.

Your faithful father,

A. M. B.

Paris: July 2, 1819.

I cannot deny myself the pleasure, dear Fanny, to tell you in a special letter how much your last letters have pleased me. They are carefully and well written, and you have at last dis-

covered the secret to write to me about yourself and the others with real sense and feeling—and not about the theatre. I do not often bestow praise, but I do so the more conscientiously when there is a cause for it, and I like your letters especially because they are what they should be, natural and full of love for those around you. Indeed I do love you! 'Love me *still*,' you say. I hope the best is still to come.

Do not be vexed with your stoutness; it is one more resemblance to your mother (and you can never be enough like her, for there is not her superior). When quite young, she was also very stout, and I hope she will be so again. I cannot recommend you to resemble *me*, for in the character of a woman I have charms only in *tableaux vivants*.

Paul's account of his 'joys and sorrows' has given us infinite amusement. I am sorry to say that Fanny Sebastiani betrayed no sign of jealousy; her love for him is perfectly unselfish.

Give Rebecca, and the boys if they will hold still, a kiss from me. I will add a few lines to each.

Your father and friend,
A. M. B.

First to you, dear Paul! I have been very well satisfied with your two last letters, and thank you for them. I wish you would not press so much on your pen. Get Mr. Gross to cut some for you, and then Uncle Joseph will cut them in the same way; keep your fingers loose, and sit upright. I have not at once answered your question regarding your marriage to Mieke, because I wanted to consider the matter. Now I think we will wait till I come home, so that I may see Mieke first. If I find her properly washed and you are a good boy for a fortnight, we can speak about it.[1]

You, my dear Felix, must state exactly what kind of music paper you wish to have; ruled or not ruled, and if the former you must say distinctly how it is to be ruled. When I went into a shop the other day to buy some, I found that I did not know myself what I wanted to have. Read over your letter

[1] Mieke was the gardener's daughter, then four years old. Paul was six.

before you send it off, and ascertain whether, if addressed to yourself, you could fully understand it and execute the commission contained in it.

You, dear Rebecca, have not written to me for a long time, and shall not have a letter from me. You must be content with a kiss or a fillip—on paper. By-the-by, your last letter was a downright scrawl; I dare say the farm-quills are to blame for it.

I beg to remind mother of the drilling-master for all of you. I think a good one might be found somewhere at Neufchâtel. Felix must diligently practise swimming, *but only in the swimming school.* I hope the prohibition of gymnastics will not extend to our innocent place.

Your father and friend,

A. M. B.

In the year 1820 Fanny was confirmed, and her father wrote to her the following letter on the occasion:—

Paris.

My dear Daughter,—You have taken an important step, and in sending you my best wishes for the day and for your future happiness, I have it at heart to speak seriously to you on subjects hitherto not touched upon.

Does God exist? What is God? Is He a part of ourselves, and does He continue to live after the other part has ceased to be? And where? And how? All this I do not know, and therefore I have never taught you anything about it. But I know that there exists in me and in you and in all human beings an everlasting inclination towards all that is good, true, and right, and a conscience which warns and guides us when we go astray. I know it, I believe it, I live in this faith, and this is my religion. This I could not teach you, and nobody can learn it; but everybody has it who does not intentionally and knowingly cast it away. The example of your mother, the best and noblest of mothers, whose whole life is devotion, love, and charity, is like a bond to me that you will *not* cast it away. You have grown up under her guidance, ever intuitively receiving and adopting what alone gives real worth to mankind. Your mother has

been, and is, and I trust will long remain to you, to your sister and brothers, and to all of us, a providential leading star on our path of life. When you look at her and turn over in your thoughts all the immeasurable good she has lavished upon you by her constant self-sacrificing devotion as long as you live, and when that reflection makes your heart and eyes overflow with gratitude, love, and veneration, then you feel God and are godly.

This is all I can tell you about religion, all I know about it; but this will remain true, as long as one man will exist in the creation, as it has been true since the first man was created.

The outward form of religion your teacher has given you is historical, and changeable like all human ordinances. Some thousands of years ago the Jewish form was the reigning one, then the heathen form, and now it is the Christian. We, your mother and I, were born and brought up by our parents as Jews, and without being obliged to change the form of our religion have been able to follow the divine instinct in us and in our conscience. We have educated you and your brothers and sister in the Christian faith, because it is the creed of most civilised people, and contains nothing that can lead you away from what is good, and much that guides you to love, obedience, tolerance, and resignation, even if it offered nothing but the example of its Founder, understood by so few, and followed by still fewer.

By pronouncing your confession of faith you have fulfilled the claims of *society* on you, and obtained the *name* of a Christian. Now *be* what your duty as a human being demands of you, *true*, *faithful*, *good*; obedient and devoted till death to your mother, and I may also say to your father, unremittingly attentive to the voice of your conscience, which may be suppressed but never silenced, and you will gain the highest happiness that is to be found on earth, harmony and contentedness with yourself.

I embrace you with fatherly tenderness, and hope always to find in you a daughter worthy of your, of our, mother. Farewell, and remember my words.

The same earnest, strict notion of the duties of children towards their parents—and also of parents towards their children—pervades the whole system of education. This father did not believe he had done enough when he provided the best teachers for his children; he educated them himself, and as long as he lived thought none of his children, though grown up, too old for his discipline or even correction.

The following letter dates from the same period as the last:—

Paris: July 16, 1820. Sunday, and most lovely weather.

Dear Fanny,—You have written me many long and good letters during my present absence from home, and I am truly satisfied and thankful. I have become your debtor, which is a drawback, not only because I must plead guilty, but also because it is now too late to answer many things in your letter, and I must limit myself to the few last.

I hope and trust that your mother may have made up her mind for the journey, and that I may be able to persuade your aunt Henrietta to-morrow. Both, however, may have their own good reasons for not wishing to travel, which we must then respect, and give up the pleasure. If so, it will be harder for you than for me, because you are younger and consequently more curious. On the other hand, you have much time still before you, to see and enjoy what is beautiful, whilst the few years I may yet be spared will soon have passed away. How fast the vital faculties decline, when once the constitution has received a shock, I am, to my great grief, daily reminded of by the deplorable state of poor Madame Bigot. I am afraid you will not see her again, and you would hardly recognise her. She constantly puts me in mind of Heine's coarse but expressive words about the ever-memorable S.—'A pity for that beautiful soul in such a vile body!'

You beg me to be at ease about your intercourse with M. and A. Why should I be uneasy about it, when I know that you have too much sense and modesty to be intrusive? I for my part have always felt a sort of misgiving against coming in as a third upon the already existing close union of two. The

third is always the scapegoat. The fourth and fifth, etc., no longer spoil anything; on the contrary, they rather generalise the conversation, whilst the third destroys intimacy. Whoever provides against being the third is almost always certain of being welcome, at least not unwelcome. Your line of conduct towards M. and A. will shape itself quite naturally.

Your last songs are at Viry, where I shall fetch them tomorrow, and then I must find some one who will sing them decently to me. M. Leo has played me Felix's last fugue, very imperfectly.[1] He pronounces it very good and in the true style, but difficult. I liked it well; it is a great thing. I should not have expected him to set to work in such good earnest so soon, for such a fugue requires reflection and perseverance. What you wrote to me about your musical occupations with reference to and in comparison with Felix was both rightly thought and expressed. Music will perhaps become his profession, whilst for *you* it can and must only be an ornament, never the root of your being and doing. We may therefore pardon him some ambition and desire to be acknowledged in a pursuit which appears very important to him, because he feels a vocation for it, whilst it does you credit that you have always shown yourself good and sensible in these matters; and your very joy at the praise he earns proves that you might, in his place, have merited equal approval. Remain true to these sentiments and to this line of conduct; they are feminine, and only what is truly feminine is an ornament to your sex.

My thanks to Rebecca for her letter, and to Paul for his postscript, which is pretty well written; but his h's and k's are still far from perfect—the broad figure of the latter keeps my own embonpoint in countenance.

Tuesday.—They went over your Romances yesterday at Viry, and you will be glad to hear that Fanny Sebastiani sang 'Les soins de mon troupeau' very nicely and correctly, and likes them much. I confess that I prefer that song to all the others—so far as I can judge of them, for they were only very imperfectly performed. It is bright, and has an easy, natural flow, which most of the others have not; some of them

[1] Felix was then eleven years old.

are too ambitious for the words. But that one song I like so much that since yesterday I have often sung it to myself, whilst I remember nothing of the others; and I think facility one of the most important qualities of a song. At the same time it is far from trivial, and the passage 'si j'ai trouvé pour eux une fontaine claire' is even very felicitous; only it appears to me to give too decided an end to the lines immediately following the words 's'ils sont heureux.' I strongly advise you to keep as much as possible to this lightness and naturalness in your future compositions.

Mother wrote to me the other day that you had complained of a want of pieces for the exercise of the third and fourth finger, and that Felix had thereupon directly composed one for you. Madame Bigot thinks that if those fingers do not get on like the others, the true reason is not a want of exercises, but of exercise, of real, earnest practice. She says that you ought to spend a part of your practising time every day in observing quite mechanically the movement of those fingers, without regard to music or expression, and that Cramer has composed a number of pieces calculated to strengthen them; these have to be played again and again, slowly and with constant attention to a firm motion of the two weak ones. She says that in this way and by indefatigable patience she has succeeded in making all her fingers equally strong, and that this is the only way. I hope you will consider this advice.

As I do not believe that mother will come to Coblenz, the time of our meeting must be somewhat delayed; but I hope that the ill-omened saying about matters deferred will not prove true in our case, and that we may all meet again in health and happiness. Your Father.

Aunt Jette wishes you to send her some of your German songs.

On Fanny's twenty-third birthday Abraham wrote to her as follows:—

Every year makes us both 365 days older. Who knows how often I may yet congratulate you on your birthday, and speak a serious word to you? or how long you may be able and willing to hear it?

I will, then, tell you to-day, dear Fanny, that in all essential points, all that is most important, I am so much satisfied with you that I have no wish left. You are good in heart and mind. 'Good' is a small word, but has a big meaning, and I would not apply it to everybody.

However, you must still improve! You must become more steady and collected, and prepare more earnestly and eagerly for your real calling, the *only* calling of a young woman—I mean the state of a housewife. True economy is true liberality. He who throws away money must become either a miser or an impostor. Women have a difficult task; the constant occupation with apparent trifles, the interception of each drop of rain, that it may not evaporate, but be conducted into the right channel, and spread wealth and blessing; the unremitting attention to every detail, the appreciation of every moment and its improvement for some benefit or other—all these and more (you will think of many more) are the weighty duties of a woman.

Indeed you want neither mind nor sense to fulfil them faithfully, and yet there is ample scope left for constant endeavour to strengthen your will, to collect your thoughts, and arrive at a right choice and appreciation of your occupations. Do this as long as you can freely, and before you are compelled. Whilst Providence still allows you to live with your parents, try to do many things better than they do. Give a solid foundation to the building, and there will be no want of ornaments.

But I won't preach, and am not old enough to prate. Accept once more my fatherly wishes, and take my well-meant advice to heart. Your Father.

It was the chief principle of Abraham's method of education that every progress made is nothing but a progress, that what is good may be still better—in a word, that education is never finished, and that fathers and mothers, as long as they live, must never cease to be the guides and counsellors of their children. This view is a thoroughly Jewish one. It becomes an evil when grown-up sons or daughters have to bow to the will of a father

in his dotage, and are kept in forced minority, until death breaks the unnatural fetters. But when, as in this case, the father becomes in time a paternal friend, who by his good counsel continues naturally to maintain the beautiful office of a ruler, then his authority is the most beneficial that can be imagined. An exquisitely beautiful relationship subsisted between Abraham and his son Felix, and it is not too much to say that without this father Felix Mendelssohn would never have become what he was. The career of a musician was at that time much less frequently pursued than it is now, and—in Germany especially—is a thorny and deceitful path. Indeed by many clever and distinguished men the profession of music was not looked upon as a proper career. Abraham's brother-in-law Bartholdy writes to this effect:—

'I cannot quite agree with you in your not pointing out a positive vocation to Felix. It could and would be no hindrance to his talent for music, which is so universally acknowledged. The idea of a professional musician will not go down with me. It is no career, no life, no aim; in the beginning you are just as far as at the end, and with full consciousness of its being so; as a rule you are even better off at first than at last. Let the boy go through a regular course of schooling, and then prepare for a state-career by studying law at the university. His art will remain his friend and companion. So far as I can judge of the present state of things, there is more need than ever of people that have pursued a university study. Should you design him for a merchant, let him enter a counting-house early.'

Happily Abraham was not influenced by this advice. Felix learned and studied hard, and attended lectures on law, but his father allowed him to fix upon music as his actual career, and the result has proved that it was not a bad choice. The father's whole endeavour was bestowed upon giving this career a firm, earnest purpose and direction. He constantly drew his son's attention to the old masters, especially Bach; it was he who urged him to the composition of 'St. Paul,' and insisted on his accepting a fixed employment. Music was to be to him a matter of real earnestness, and not a mere recreation.

With reference to the directorship of the Düsseldorf town theatre, accepted and soon resigned again by Felix, he wrote[1]:—

'With regard to the administrative career, it gives rise to another series of reflections, which I wish to impress upon you. Those who have the opportunity and the inclination to become more closely and intimately acquainted with you, as well as those to whom you have the opportunity and the inclination to reveal yourself more fully, cannot fail to love and respect you. But this is really far from being sufficient to enable a man to enter on life with active efficiency; on the contrary, as you advance in years, and opportunity and inclination fail, both in others and yourself, it is much more likely to lead to isolation and misanthropy. Even what we consider faults will be respected, or at least treated with forbearance, when once firmly and thoroughly established in the world, while the individual himself disappears. He has least of all arrived at the ideal of virtue who exacts it most inexorably from others. The sternest moral principle is a citadel, the outworks of which may well be relinquished if by so doing we can fix ourselves more firmly in the centre, and defend that with our very life.

'Hitherto it is undeniable that you have never been able to divest yourself of a tendency to austerity and irascibility, suddenly grasping an object and as suddenly relinquishing it, and thus creating for yourself many obstacles in a practical point of view. For example, I must confess that though I approve of your withdrawing from any active participation in the management of the details of the Düsseldorf theatre, I by no means approve of the manner in which you accomplished your object, since you undertook it voluntarily, and, to speak candidly, rather heedlessly. From the beginning you, most wisely, declined any positive compact, and only agreed to undertake the study and conducting of particular operas, and, in accordance with this resolution, very properly insisted on the appointment of another music-director. When you came here some time ago with the object of engaging your rank and file, I did not at all like the idea; I thought, however, that as you were to be here at all events, you could not with politeness decline

[1] Already published in Lady Wallace's translation of *Mendelssohn's Letters.*

this service. But on your return to Düsseldorf, after wisely refusing to undertake another journey for the purpose of making engagements for the theatre, instead of persevering in this intention and getting rid of all annoyances, you allowed yourself to be overwhelmed by them; and as they naturally became very obnoxious to you, instead of quietly striving to remedy them, and thus gradually get rid of them, you at one leap extricated yourself, and by so doing undeniably subjected yourself to the imputation of fickleness and unsteadiness, made a decided enemy of a man whom at all events policy should have taught you not to displease, and most probably offended and lost the friendship of many members of the committee, among whom there are no doubt most respectable people. If my view of this matter is incorrect, then teach me a better one.'

In the same letter Abraham Mendelssohn writes about Felix's lifelong craving for a good opera-text: 'I must once more resume the subject of the dramatic career, as I feel very anxious about it on your account. You have not, according to my judgment, had sufficient experience, either of production or administration, to decide with certainty that your disinclination towards it proceeds from anything innate in your talents or character. I know no dramatic composer, except Beethoven, who has not written a number of operas, now totally forgotten, before attaining the right object at the right moment, and making a place for himself. You have made only one public effort, which was partly frustrated by your text, and, in fact, was neither very successful nor the reverse. Since then you have been too fastidious about the words, you did not succeed in finding the right man, and perhaps did not seek him in a right manner. I cannot but think that, by more diligent inquiries and more moderate pretensions, you would at length attain your object.'

Such was Abraham's counsel to his son with regard to his career as a musician. But his advice did not stop there. So sound was his musical judgment, and so fine his ear, that Felix —in reply to a criticism on one of his compositions—thus writes[1] to him:—

[1] Already translated by Lady Wallace.

'I have still to thank you for your last letter, and my "Ave." I often cannot understand how it is possible for you to have so acute a judgment with regard to music, without being technically musical; and if I could express what I feel with as much clearness and intuitive perception as you do, as soon as you enter on the subject, I never would make another obscure speech all my life long. I thank you a thousand times for this, and also for your opinion of Bach. I ought to feel rather provoked that after only one very imperfect hearing of my composition you at once discovered what, after a long familiarity with it, I have only just found out; but then again it pleases me to see that such a definite sense of music exists, and that you in particular possess it; for the deficiencies in the middle and end consist of such minute faults, which might have been remedied by a very few notes (I mean by their being struck out), that neither I nor any other musician would have been aware of them without repeatedly hearing the piece, because we in fact seek the cause much deeper. They injure the simplicity of the harmony, which at the beginning I like so much; and though it is my opinion that these faults would be less perceptible with better execution, especially with a numerous choir, still some traces of them will always remain. Another time I shall endeavour to do better.'

Although, as we have seen, Abraham was of opinion that a girl's only vocation was that of a housewife, it was a matter of deep importance to him thoroughly to develop the great talents existing in his daughter, and Leah perfectly agreed with him. Fanny thus learnt thorough-bass, and had instruction in the theory of composition; as to piano-playing, she stood in many respects on a level with her brother. As early as 1818, when only thirteen, she gave a splendid proof of her uncommon musical memory by playing twenty-four Preludes of Bach's by heart as a surprise for her father. The following passage from a letter of Henrietta's is characteristic of Abraham: 'Fanny's wonderful achievement of learning twenty-four Preludes by heart, and your perseverance, dearest Leah, in superintending her practising, have made me speechless with astonishment, and I have only recovered the use of my voice to make this

great success generally known. But with all the intense admiration I feel both for you and Fanny, I must confess that I think the thing decidedly blamable: the exertion is too great, and might easily have hurt her. The extraordinary talent of your children wants direction, not forcing. Papa Abraham, however, is insatiable, and the best appears to him only just good enough. I fancy I see him during Fanny's performance, happy and contented in his mind, but saying little. But the children will soon discover that they are his pride and joy, and will not mind his stoic appearance.'

Fanny did not lose her excellent musical memory: during her residence in Rome, for instance, her copious repertory of Bach, Beethoven, and nearly all the German classics proved very useful to her, as music was not to be had.

At first the parents themselves undertook the scientific instruction of their children; but here Henrietta's remark proved right—'the best was only just good[1] enough'; and as Abraham's discriminating eye had found out Zelter as the proper teacher of music, so in his choice of a tutor he was no less happy: it fell on Heyse, afterwards so famous as a philologist, and father of Paul Heyse the poet. Heyse remained in the Mendelssohn family for several years, and to him the children were indebted for their well-grounded scientific information. As Felix did not wish to learn Greek by himself, his younger sister Rebecca joined these lessons, and with her great linguistic talent acquired such a knowledge of the language that many years afterwards she read Homer and Plato without difficulty, and her help was gladly accepted by her nephew and two sons at their Greek lessons.

In 1819 Abraham made a journey to Paris alone, on business—the negotiation of the war-indemnity to be paid by France to Prussia. We can imagine how unwillingly he left his family: the 'pain sec à Paris' had lost its old attraction.

Henrietta writes to Leah: 'I have been truly glad to see the good, honest, noble brother, husband, and patriarch again. He has already paid me a visit here in the country, and our thoughts reverted to you and the children, and the rich blessing

[1] Quotation from Goethe's *Italian Journey*, since become proverbial.

God has given him in you all; it pervades everything good that happens to him. But I really do not know how the poor man will manage to spend his summer alone at Paris. Even the opera-bouffe seems to have lost its charm for him, and with good reason he prefers the musicians of his home-orchestra to the most celebrated virtuosi. However, he appears to me quite resigned, and I must say that in many respects I think him even improved; he knows that he is happy, and the vivid sensation of his happiness has made him younger; he is no longer the stern philosopher, only grave as becomes a man, and sometimes in the tender frame of mind natural to a husband and father separated from all he loves.'

His absence proved longer than had been anticipated; his letters to Fanny already quoted date from this time. At last, in the autumn of 1820, he returned home. In the letter which Henrietta gave him for his wife we read: 'Dearest Leah,—Now you have your dear, noble husband home again, and quite as you must wish him, with a slight tinge of ill-humour against the France of to-day. Whether this will raise Berlin in his estimation I do not know; anyhow, he never forgets that his happiness has both bloomed and ripened into the most beautiful fruit there; and for such fruit he readily foregoes some of a more substantial kind which does not grow in your climate.'

We can easily understand the disagreeable impression which the state of France in 1820 would make on a liberal-minded, almost republicanly inclined, man, especially if we take into account the drawbacks of his situation during his residence in that country. We may assume, however, that the pecuniary result of the journey was a good one, and compensated for a rather uncomfortable twelvemonth, the more so as the ensuing ten years, from 1820 to 1830, were a period of undisturbed happiness.

In the autumn of 1821 Felix for the first time ventured forth from the parental roof, and, accompanied by Zelter, the intimate old friend, travelled to Weimar, and spent a fortnight in Goethe's house. Shortly before his departure he had begun to practise the art of improvisation, and at Weimar he

extemporised in the presence of Goethe, Hummel, many artists, and the court. We subjoin a few passages from the letters which Felix, then eleven years old, wrote to his parents :—

Weimar: November 6, 1821.

. . . Now[1] listen, all of you. To-day is Tuesday. On Sunday, the Sun of Weimar, Goethe, arrived. We went to church in the morning, and heard half of Händel's music to the 100th Psalm. The organ, though large, is weak; that of St. Mary's church is smaller but much more powerful. The Weimar one has fifty stops, forty-four notes, and one thirty-two feet pipe.

After church I wrote to you that little letter dated 4th instant, and went to the Elephant Hotel, where I made a sketch of Lucas Cranach's house. Two hours later Professor Zelter came, calling out: 'Goethe has come, the old gentleman has come!' We instantly hurried downstairs and went to Goethe's house. He was in the garden, just coming round a hedge. Isn't it strange, dear father—just the same as it happened with you! He is very kind, but I do not think any of his portraits like him. He then went through his interesting collection of fossils, which has been newly arranged by his son, and said repeatedly: 'H'm, h'm, I am quite satisfied.' After that I walked in the garden with him and Professor Zelter, for about half an hour. Then we went to dinner. He does not look like a man of seventy-three, rather of fifty. After dinner, Fräulein Ulrike, Frau von Goethe's sister, asked him for a kiss, and I followed her example. Every morning I have a kiss from the author of 'Faust' and 'Werther,' and every afternoon two kisses from the father and friend Goethe. Think of that! In the afternoon I played to Goethe for about two hours, partly fugues of Bach and partly improvisations. In the evening they arranged a whist table, and Professor Zelter, who took a hand, said: 'Whist means, that you are to hold your tongue.' There's one of his good expressions for you. We all had supper together, even Goethe, who doesn't generally take it. Now something for you, my dear coughing Fanny! Yesterday

[1] Already published in *Goethe and Mendelssohn*, by Professor Carl M. B., translated by Miss M. E. von Glehn, Macmillan and Co.

morning I took your songs to Frau von Goethe, who has a good voice and will sing them to the old gentleman. I told him that you had written them, and asked him whether he would like to hear them. He said, 'Yes, yes, with pleasure.' Frau von Goethe likes them very much indeed, and that is a good omen. To-day or to-morrow he is to hear them.[1]

Weimar: November 10.

On Monday I went to see Frau von Henkel, and also his Royal Highness the hereditary Grand Duke, who was very much pleased with my Sonata in G minor. On Wednesday evening a very pretty opera, 'Oberon,' by Wranitzky, was given. On Thursday morning the Grand Duke, the Duchess, and the Hereditary Grand Duke came to us, and I had to play. And I played from eleven in the morning till ten in the evening, with only two hours' interruption, finishing with Hummel's Fantasia. When I was with him the other day, I played the Sonata in G minor, which he liked very much, also the piece for Begas, and yours, dear Fanny. I play much more here than at home, seldom less than four hours, and sometimes even eight. Every afternoon Goethe opens his instrument (a Streicher) with the words, 'I have not yet heard you to-day—now make a little noise for me.' And then he generally sits down by my side, and when I have done (mostly extemporizing) I ask for a kiss, or I take one. You cannot fancy how good and kind he is to me, no more can you form an idea of the treasures in minerals, busts, prints, statues, and large original drawings, etc., which the polar star of poets possesses. It does not

[1] Goethe then composed for Fanny the following verses, which he wrote down himself and gave to Zelter with the words, 'Take that to the dear child':—

Denn ich mir in stiller Seele
Singe leise Lieder vor,
Wie ich fühle dass Sie fehle,
Die ich einzig mir erkor:

Möcht' ich hoffen, dass Sie sänge
Was ich Ihr so gern vertraut,
Ach! aus dieser Brust und Enge
Drängen frohe Lieder laut.

When to quiet musings given,
With my songs and strains alone
All my thoughts to her are driven
Whom I fain would call my own:

Might I hope to hear her singing
What to her I would impart,
All my bosom would be ringing
With the transports of my heart

strike me that his figure is imposing; he is not much taller than father; but his look, his language, his name, they are imposing. The amount of sound in his voice is wonderful, and he can shout like ten thousand warriors. His hair is not yet white, his step is firm, his way of speaking mild. On Tuesday Professor Zelter wanted to take us to Jena, and from there straight to Leipzig. (We are often at the Schopenhauers'. On Friday I heard Molke and Strohmein there. On the stage here there is—think of that, Fanny—a singer fourteen years old, who the other day in 'Oberon' sang d in alto pure and strong, and whose voice reaches to the f above). On Saturday evening, Adéle Schopenhauer (the daughter) was with us, and Goethe against his custom spent the whole evening in our company. Our departure was spoken of, and Adéle decided that we would all throw ourselves at Professor Zelter's feet and beg for a few days' delay. We dragged him into the room, and then Goethe began with his voice of thunder to abuse Zelter for wanting to take us to *that old nest*, as he called it. He *ordered him to be silent and obey without resistance*; to leave us here, go to Jena alone, and come back again. Professor Zelter was besieged from all sides, so he had to give in, and do everything as Goethe wished. And now Goethe was assailed from all sides, they kissed his mouth and his hands, and whoever could not get at them patted and kissed his shoulders; and if he had not been at home, I believe we should have carried him home in triumph, as the people of Rome did Cicero after the first Catilinian speech. Fräulein Ulrike also embraced him; and as he makes love to her (she is very pretty), the whole thing had a good effect.

On Monday at eleven there was a concert at Frau von Henkel's. Of course, when Goethe says, 'There is company to-morrow at eleven, little one, and you too must play us something,' I cannot say 'No!'

Leah had sent these letters to Henrietta, and she gives vent to her enthusiasm as follows:—

'How can I ever thank you enough, dearest Leah, for the pleasure these delightful letters have given me! You are a happy mother! It is impossible to tell you how deeply they

have moved and delighted me. What I feel when I think of that boy, so gifted and enthusiastic, so full of feeling, so gentle and natural, would appear to you like nonsense if I tried to put it into words. But no, you feel it yourselves. You, loving mother, must feel it in your mother's heart, and thank Providence for giving you such children and such a son. He is an artist in the highest sense, rare talents combined with the noblest, tenderest heart. If God spare him, his letters will in long, long years to come create the deepest interest. Take care of them as of a holy relic—indeed they are sacred already as the effusion of so pure, childlike a mind. How beautiful it must have been to watch his frank and familiar intercourse with the noble old man, Goethe, the poet-king. The constant dream of our youth—the delight of living near Goethe—has been fulfilled in Felix, and Abraham's continual humming when he was young has ripened into the extraordinary talent of his son. I thank God that he has granted you the happiness to see this day. Our poor mother hardly anticipated such results when she was impatient with your continual singing, dear Abraham! You sang then the choruses from Schultz's "Athalie," and she used to exclaim, "How sick I am of *tout l'univers*!"'

The life of Abraham Mendelssohn is in future so closely linked with those of his children that we will henceforth consider them jointly.

Wilhelm Hensel

WILHELM HENSEL.

We must now mention an event which, though apparently quite unconnected with our narrative, had in course of time the greatest influence on the life of Abraham Mendelssohn's eldest daughter, Fanny. In the month of January 1821 the Hereditary Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia and his consort were in Berlin, and grand court festivities took place in their honour. On January 27, *tableaux vivants* and pantomimic representations were given, the subjects taken from Moore's poem 'Lalla Rookh,' which had then just appeared and was making its way round the whole of Europe. The magnificence of the display, the jewels and pearls, the costly draperies and weapons, the assemblage of so many representatives of beauty and rank, gave a rare and delightful character to the festival. When the representation was over, the performer of Lalla Rookh, the Grand Duchess herself, exclaimed with a sigh, 'Is it really over now? And are those who come after us to have no remembrance of this happy evening?' The king heard this, and as *tableaux vivants* are sometimes arranged in imitation of pictures, so he resolved to have these *tableaux vivants* painted in a drawing-room book by the young artist who had arranged them, all the performers sitting for their portraits. Wilhelm Hensel, before his work was sent to St. Petersburg to the Grand Duchess, exhibited it for a few days in his studio, and there made the acquaintance of Fanny Mendelssohn Bartholdy, who had come with her parents to admire his beautiful drawings, and who in later times became his wife.

In the early history of this artist, we are surrounded by quite a different atmosphere, almost a different world, from the one hitherto described. The ideas, the views, the conditions of

education, all are different, even the race is not the same. Until now we have been watching a family of pure Jewish descent, tracing its origin from Palestine; and as we dug up the roots of the family, the cosmopolitan character of Judaism showed itself in our migrations through the various towns and countries in which we met their ancestors—Dessau, Berlin, Paris, Hamburg; and although in patriotic feeling true Germans, they had in their education many French elements. On the other hand the origin of the Hensel family is found in the plains of North Germany, and their type is decidedly Christian-Teutonic. Thus the conditions of life were widely opposed, and Wilhelm Hensel and Fanny Mendelssohn Bartholdy, both typical representatives of their race, were as different as possible. And yet it proved that their natures harmonised beautifully together; each supplied the wants of the other, and thus, without either of them giving up anything of their originality, they formed a most happy unity.

Wilhelm Hensel's father was a poor country parson, first at Trebbin—where, on July 6, 1794, Wilhelm was born—and then at Linum; both scanty little villages in the neighbourhood of Berlin, in the dreary sands of the Mark, and Linum surrounded by endless peat bogs.

In spite of his very small income and the oppression of the Napoleonic time, Hensel succeeded in keeping up an honourable position for his family. He died early, but his wife survived till the autumn of 1835; and, after years of anxiety and want during and after the war, the widow enjoyed the happiness of witnessing the start, the success, and the marriage of her son.

From his early days Wilhelm showed a great taste for painting. He spent all his leisure time partly in painting, partly in preparing requisites for it, making his own colours out of fruit, leaves, or roots—for there were no paint-boxes at Linum, and the means of the family were not enough to provide them on a sufficient scale.

It appeared impossible to the parents to fulfil Wilhelm's ardent desire of devoting himself to art. He had to embrace a vocation that would secure his livelihood, and with a heavy heart chose that of a mining engineer. Yet every free minute

was given up to art, and by a piece of good luck it happened that a clever art-critic saw one of Hensel's drawings. He discovered decided talent in the little picture, and, when he learnt that the young artist was entirely self-taught, urged him to abandon the mining career and to study painting. Nor did he stop there, but procured him the necessary support during the first few years.

Thus Hensel had for the present moment obtained what he wished. However, care and trouble became his lot; for the pecuniary assistance he received was so small as to be barely sufficient for his own wants; and, young as he was, he had to charge himself with duties and responsibilities of the heaviest kind. His father died, and Wilhelm, though still a mere child, became the head of the family; the widow and her daughters had to be maintained, without suffering for his having given up the mining profession. Art therefore, though yet to be studied, had at once to provide bread. No work seemed too hard for Wilhelm. He made illustrations for pocket-books and almanacs; he learnt etching, so as not to be obliged to share the produce of his drawings with some one else. To accomplish this he had to work at night by the light of a thin tallow candle, and to this night-work must be attributed the shortsightedness of his later years. The pretty illustrations of Arndt's tales are specimens of his etchings.

His work was interrupted by the outbreak of the war in 1813. Hensel was not for a moment doubtful what to do: he was one of the first to enlist as a volunteer, took an honourable part in both campaigns, and was wounded several times.

He was present at both triumphal entrances into Paris, and after the conclusion of peace left the army and remained in the French capital, in order to devote some time to the study of its art-treasures.

After his second return from France he was for a while uncertain whether he should not give up painting and turn to literary pursuits. Some friends, especially Brentano, Chamisso, Arnim, and Tieck, tried to persuade him to do so. Those were sad times, and the young painter's prospects were unfavourable. The prosperity of many families had received a severe, blow and

most people were obliged to exert all their strength to satisfy the common wants of life. A period of need and privation had destroyed all taste for the beauty and ornament of life, and there was but little prospect of the furtherance of arts. Private persons did hardly anything in this direction, and the government, even if willing, had not the necessary means. Hensel's poetic talent was considerable, but his love of painting carried the victory, and poetry remained only 'a friend and playmate.' Regardless of all obstacles he continued his way. We think this the proper place to insert an account of what Bartholdy was at this very time doing in Rome towards relieving a similar state of things. The following two letters on the subject are addressed to his brother-in-law Abraham:—

Rome: December 25, 1816.

I can write nothing but good about Veit. He is an able and active man. He is now working at the second cartoons for my room, and the progress he has made in the few months since he did the first fresco is hardly credible. Altogether these paintings have been a real benefit to our artists, not because of the sums which my slight means have enabled me to give them, and which I have given gladly and unselfishly, but because of the development of their own powers, to which without their being conscious of it I have helped them, and indeed with full intention have forced them.

February 6, 1817.

You want to know some particulars about my fresco-paintings. I will give you an account of my doings. When I came here, I found many German and Prussian artists of talent and genius, with no opportunity of turning their abilities to account; no work, no orders, except paltry drawings for booksellers, and now and then a portrait, or a small, half-finished composition or oil-painting, just the symptom of a longing to create something. The bad consequence was not only that the artists remained unknown, but even that they did not know themselves, and in a kind of excitement of the imagination overrated their own powers. Such a state of things, and

so helpless and awkward a position, filled me with pity. I did not believe my influence sufficient for claiming official assistance in their behalf; nor did I know what to ask for, nor indeed how to make myself understood, considering the barbarism at Berlin in regard to artistic matters. Therefore I had myself to undergo some sacrifices, and even to expect some abuse, which is never wanting when any one carries out an enterprise of more or less public character. I have entered upon it with joy and courage, as I shall always do when I think I can be of service to my country.

Fresco-painting was the most suitable for all my purposes: (1) because, if successful, it is a lasting monument of artistic labour in Rome, the centre of the world of art, where the truth, whether good, bad, or indifferent, soon comes to light; (2) because it affords the artist an opportunity of discovering his own powers, in a kind of work where quickness of execution is necessary, and constant correcting, reflecting, and refining is out of the question; (3) because the size of the work allows its faults and merits to be easily seen; (4) because when several young artists work together palpable blunders are sure not to escape without notice from one or other, and thus emulation is excited; (5) lastly, because it affords them the means of working at one's profession for a year.

The room is beautifully light and airy, with an extensive view of Rome.[1] I have not put any constraint upon my artists either in the choice and arrangement of the subjects or in any other artistic matters, but have candidly given them my opinion when they showed me their sketches, and my criticisms have been well received. The lease of my house, where they are painting, lasts for another four years. After that time, supposing the state of my affairs in Italy to be still the same, my not over-modest landlord is sure to raise my rent so much that I shall not be able to remain. I have resigned my claim on the cartoons. Copies on a small scale I shall send to his Majesty. Thus I have shown the artists and all people who know anything of the subject that I am not guided by selfish

[1] The house on Monte Pincio is still called Casa Bartholdy.

interests. Neither can anybody accuse me of vanity, for I keep in the background as much as possible, and perhaps may even not escape ingratitude. God knows that the expense is heavy for me, and that, with so many other necessary expenses and my unfitness for economy, I pass many a sleepless night, pondering over the sums I spend, and how I shall scrape so much money together. But the really rich people do nothing, or only for their own private purposes.

Henrietta writes to Leah about the frescoes: 'Veit, Schadow, and another young German artist[1] (I almost think he is from Berlin) are at this moment painting Bartholdy's rooms *al fresco*. Is not that quite in his own grand style? He ought to be a Pope, Bartholdy I. and Leo X., who resembled him in loving all that is great and beautiful, without thinking of the cost.'

Bartholdy himself, although no productive artist, took an active part in literature. His chief work is the 'History of the Rising of the Tyrolese against the French,' of which Immermann owns to have made good use in his tragedy of 'Andreas Hofer.' Heine, in the second volume of his 'Reisebilder,' says: 'Bartholdy's "War of the Tyrolese Peasants in the year 1809" is a clever, well-written book, and its shortcomings are easily explained by the zeal with which the author, like all generous minds, takes the part of the oppressed, and by the fact that at the time he wrote gunpowder-smoke still clouded the events.'

He also wrote the Life of his friend and protector, Cardinal Gonsalvi. Of his beautiful art-collections we have already made mention.

There was no such friend and protector of art in Berlin at that time, and Bartholdy was right in calling the state of things there barbaric. The Berlin artists had to be content with the same scanty means of existence as those in Rome, before Bartholdy, to the best of his endeavours, lent them a helping hand — chiefly 'miserable booksellers' drawings.'

[1] Cornelius, Overbeck, and Schnorr were employed by Bartholdy beside those named above.

As in our time calendars and almanacks, so then pocket-books were the fashion, and Hensel eagerly resumed his work, and also furnished literary contributions. His industry at length found its reward; the drawings of 'Lalla Rookh' made him generally known, and he received from the Prussian Government a scholarship enabling him to study in Rome, accompanied by an order to copy 'Raphael's Transfiguration' in the size of the original. This journey was of the highest influence on his artistic career.

His essentially German nature and direction of life had happily found a firm and immovable basis in his love for Fanny, before he went to Rome, although the parents did not allow a formal engagement until his return. They wanted to guard their child from every possibility of a disappointment, and we cannot blame them for not fully recognising the strength of Hensel's character and the depth of his love after such a short acquaintance. They were, moreover, afraid of his being converted to the Roman faith—an apprehension for which his poetic nature, the example of his sister Luise, and the Roman belief and Roman sympathies of all his above-mentioned friends, gave sufficient ground. Fanny alone, in this respect as in all others, placed unbounded confidence in him.

Thus he had to part for long years without being accepted; but this uncertain and incomplete state had its own charm. Before he set off he drew the portraits of the whole family and their nearest friends, and thus took as it were mentally his place in the circle to which he wished to belong. These portraits and Leah's letters were, during the whole time of his absence, all that linked him to the family. For the strict mother had not permitted a correspondence with Fanny. Her reasons for this are thus given in a letter to Hensel:—

'. . . Seriously, dear Mr. Hensel, you must not be angry with me because I cannot allow a correspondence between you and Fanny. Put yourself, in fairness, for one moment in the place of a mother, and exchange your interests for mine, and my refusal will appear to you natural, just, and sensible, whereas you are probably now violently denouncing my proceeding as most barbaric. For the same reason that makes me forbid an

engagement, I must declare myself averse to any correspondence. You know that I truly esteem you, that I have indeed a real affection for you, and entertain no objections to you personally. The reasons why I have not as yet decided in your favour are, the difference of age, and the uncertainty of your position. A man may not think of marrying before his prospects in life are, to a certain degree, assured. At any rate he must not blame the girl's parents, who, having experience, sense, and cool blood, are destined by nature to judge for him and for her. An artist, as long as he is single, is a happy being, all circles open to him, court favour animates him, the small cares of life vanish before him; he steps lightly over the rocks which difference of rank has piled up in the world; he works at what he likes and how he likes, choosing his favourite subjects in art, and roving poetically in other regions, the most delighted, happy being in the whole creation. As soon as domestic cares take hold of him, all this magic disappears, the lovely colouring fades, he *must* work to sustain his family. Indeed I made it a point in my children's education to give them simple and unpretending habits, so that they might not be obliged to look out for rich marriages; but in the eyes of parents a competency, a moderate but fixed income, are necessary conditions for a happy life; and although my husband can afford to give to each of his children a handsome portion, he is not rich enough to secure the future prosperity of them all. You are at the commencement of your career, and under beautiful auspices; endeavour to realise them, use well what time and favour hold forth to you, and rest assured that we will not be against you, when, at the end of your studies, you can satisfy us about your position. Above all, do not call me selfish or avaricious, my gentle tyrant! Otherwise I must remind you that I married my husband before he had a penny of his own. But he was earning a certain although very moderate income at Fould's in Paris, and I knew he would be able to turn my dowry to good account. My mother's ambition, however, would not allow me to be the wife of a clerk, and Mendelssohn therefore had to enter into partnership with his brother, from which period, thank God, dates the prosperity of both! Fanny is very young, and, Heaven be

praised, has hitherto had no concern and no passion. I will not have you, by love-letters, transport her for years into a state of consuming passion and a yearning frame of mind quite strange to her character, when I have her now before me blooming, healthy, happy, and free.'

Leah kept her word, and wrote frequently; although her letters were a poor compensation for what Hensel desired. But he found a remedy: he made his art speak to her whom he was not allowed to address in words. The delightful drawings he sent to Berlin are still preserved; in all of them the idealised and poetically surrounded figures of the Mendelssohn circle recur again and again, and Fanny is ever the chief character. Such homage must have been more irresistible than the most eloquent letters, and also the straightest way to the mother's heart, as the following two passages from her letters may prove:—

'. . . First of all, I must express to you my long-delayed but heartfelt thanks for your highly welcome gift of the album-drawing. I cannot tell you how much its exquisite beauty of execution and fine delicate idea has surprised and touched us. The spiritualised, *à la Hensel* idealised likeness of the four children has not escaped our eyes. Although since your absence they have so much changed and grown, and somehow got coarse-grained, that your ideal likeness only represents them as they were, yet Schadow, whose sharp eye never fails to discover a likeness, at once discovered the original of the organist. I have never seen anything of the kind more elegant, neat, lovely, and perfect in execution, either by yourself or any other artist. The beauty of the group, the combination of earnestness and grace, the lovely, childlike, and yet thoughtful expression of each individual head, the arrangement of those four angels watched over by a truly Raphaelic Cecilia, all this is another proof to me that you have chosen the highest, purest of all artists as your ideal.'

Berlin: March 6, 1826.

Many thanks for the beautiful, darling little picture! I should not have thought it possible to give the heads of the

Muse and the Sphinx so much expression in so little space. But we are all too stupid to guess at the hidden meaning of the riddle, although each person and each attribute are perfectly distinct. The colour, grouping, and arrangement are very lovely and graceful. Again I notice your constant endeavour to imitate my beloved Raphael, and I admire the depth of the dark eyes, which is seen in spite of the small scale. But I earnestly wish you would not fritter away your time by so many small productions. However, you must know best how to divide your time and labour, how to continue what you have begun, and how much and what kind of leisure an artist ought to allow himself.

Many, many thanks for all your trouble in behalf of the Bartholdy collection.[1] I wish we had done putting this chaos in order! Your account concerning the removal of the frescoes is very interesting. But for more than one reason we shall not avail ourselves of the offer—not only would the expense be much too considerable for a hobby, but the difficulty of properly placing pictures of that size must also be taken into account; and—*soit dit entre nous*—with all the interest these frescoes may claim as first specimens, it is still questionable whether they are worth the money and trouble. In short, let us say no more about the matter, nor think of frescoes in our house here. Although I gratefully acknowledge your kind intentions, you will understand that a plain citizen's house is not the place for such costly and time-absorbing adornments. For instance, we should be obliged, for years together, to give up the use of such a room; and if you had but the slightest idea of the turmoil, dust, noise, and expense caused by this, I am sorry to say, much too large house of ours, and likely to continue till late in summer, you would understand my dread at the very thought of fresh workmen, plaster, scaffolding, etc. Moreover, in a time like ours, when all property is uncertain, and rarely descends to the second generation, I think it an unwarrantable encroachment upon the rights of posterity to build anything of value into the wall, so that it cannot be carried off. What was right and

[1] Bartholdy had died shortly before the letter was written.

proper for my brother, a bachelor, and living in the land of art, would be wicked in *me*, the mother of four children not yet provided for. We live on such a liberal footing, and my husband has such pleasure in giving, that undoubtedly people think us much richer than we are.

Whatever amount of care and trouble the possession of our very expensive house has involved upon me, we may perhaps ascribe to the high figure of the sum my husband has invested in it (a much larger amount than we had believed) the fact that his losses during this dreadful time have been comparatively slight. Eighteen houses have failed, among them such first-rate firms as Reichenbach in Leipzig and Goldschmidt (considered to be worth many millions) in London. Some of our acquaintance are in prison, others have committed suicide. I cannot describe to you in sufficiently gloomy colours the desolation, panic, present ruin, and dismal future prospects. They say that Rothschild's mania for business on a gigantic scale is the reason why all mercantile transactions have grown so disproportionate, and like everything exaggerated had to come to a fall.'

The time which Hensel spent in Italy, mostly in Rome, he turned to excellent profit. The copy of the Transfiguration afforded him most important instruction and improvement as an artist. It took nearly four years, beginning with a complete cleaning of the original, by means of which a quantity of details hidden under a crust of the dirt of centuries were brought to light. His picture found a place in the Raphael Saloon at Sansouci.

He also worked at a great picture of his own, Christ and the Woman of Samaria, which became the property of the King of Prussia.

After a residence of five years Hensel left Italy, which, notwithstanding his longing for Germany, had become very dear to him, and which he always regarded as his second fatherland. In one of the small two-wheeled carriages then used in Italy for quick travelling he hurried across the Alps, travelling night and day, and on to Berlin, with the greatest possible

speed. Here he was rewarded: he found Fanny still free. She too had passed eventful years, most important for her development. We now leave the sketch of Hensel's life, which will be traced further on together with that of the Mendelssohn Bartholdy family

THE JOURNEY TO SWITZERLAND.

On the 6th of July, 1822, Abraham Mendelssohn Bartholdy, with all his family, set out for a journey to Switzerland. The company consisted of the parents, the four children, aged sixteen, thirteen, eleven, and nine, their tutor Heyse, a Dr. Neuburg, and several servants. At Frauilf-on-the-Maine two very intelligent and amusing young ladies joined them, Marianne and Julia Saaling, the latter subsequently Heyse's wife. Such a journey was then a most extraordinary thing. A series of very circumstantial letters from Fanny to a friend gives a minute account of all the travelling events. On the very first day, between Berlin and Brandenburg, they had an adventure—Felix was left behind at Potsdam! When starting, the belief prevailed in each carriage that he must be in one of the others, and his absence was only discovered at the first station, Grosskreuz, three good (German) miles from Potsdam. The tutor instantly drove back, and the company had made up their minds for a long delay, but after an hour Heyse returned with the lost boy. At Potsdam he had appeared just after the carriages had started, and followed them on the road, for a long time watching the dust they raised, and running after them, but unable to reach them. He, however, continued his march, and had determined to walk as far as Brandenburg. A peasant girl joined him, they broke stout walking-sticks from the trees, and marched on cheerfully, until about a (German) mile from Grosskreuz they were met by Heyse. This good and resolute behaviour, and perhaps too his speedy appearance, saved him from the rebuke in store for him. The second day's journey, a very fatiguing one, went as far as Magdeburg.

After a trip to the Harz Mountains, they travelled, *viâ* Göttingen—where thirty-six years afterwards Rebecca's life ended, and where they made the acquaintance of Blumenbach—to Cassel, and enjoyed some animated musical intercourse with Spohr. At Frankfort, 'a great conference took place between father, Dr. Neuburg, and Herr Heyse about the road we are to follow. I have not yet heard anything about it, but they maintain that never before has a journey been arranged like this one.'

At Frankfort, Aloys Schmitt gave them a musical entertainment, which Fanny describes in the following style: 'How longingly did I think of Henning, Rietz, Kelch, Eysold, etc.! You can't believe how these good people have tortured our ears. First came a violin-player from Paris, Fémy, a pupil of Baillot's, and of great reputation. I must confess I did not like him at all—everything so soft and indistinct, no sound, no firmness of stroke, no power. Felix was of my opinion. Then they accompanied poor Felix's quartet. My only pleasure all the while was to study physiognomy. Then I had to play something, and now, "bid me not speak, bid me be silent." The whole room full of strange people, pupils and friends of Schmitt's, the accompaniment very bad, I myself trembling all over. My failure was such that I could have beaten myself, and all the others, with vexation. To break down like that in the presence of twenty virtuosi! I must quit the subject, or I shall grow angry again. Then Fémy played a quartet, and lastly Schmitt's younger brother some variations composed by himself. Schmitt has a very nice *pépinière* about him: Eliot junior from Strelitz was there, and Ferdinand Hiller, Schmitt's favourite pupil, a beautiful boy ten years old, open-hearted and frank in appearance.'

From Frankfort the whole merry caravan went southwards, *viâ* Darmstadt and Stuttgart, to Schaffhausen. The two Saaling girls, overflowing with fun and humour, contributed no small amount of the necessary travelling spirits. 'There is no end of laughing,' writes Fanny, 'and especially in the evening when we go to bed (I always sleep with them) they are most amusing. Marianne has friends everywhere, and wherever she goes is received

with raptures. Just now we are all sitting together writing letters. Not even in the Chancellor's office can they be more industrious. You cannot imagine the disorderly state of our room: a turnip-field would be a drawing-room in comparison. But we enjoy ourselves immensely, and if I write incoherently do not accuse me: there is a dreadful noise going on.'

At the St. Gothard they turned back, and Fanny's secret hopes of a glimpse of Italy were for the present disappointed. She writes: 'I have spent a day, dear Marianne,[1] the memory of which will never be extinguished in my heart, but will influence me all my life. I have seen God's grand nature, my heart has trembled with emotion and veneration, and when my excitement had subsided and I beheld what mankind considers most beautiful and lovely, when I stood on the *borders of Italy*, then my fate decrees, Thus far, but no farther. Never, never have I felt such a sensation! Sincere gratitude to God, for granting me such a day; a longing for what was hidden by the mountains; firm resolutions for my future life—all these feelings together found relief in a flood of tears. Last night I would not write to you, as I know you do not like my over-excited moods, and I *was* over-excited, but I concealed my emotion and waited until I was more quiet. But even now, when I think of yesterday and this morning, my heart swells within me and I feel strangely exalted. I will give you with as much composure and order as possible an account of my events.

'Yesterday morning at seven o'clock we left Altdorf. The sky was somewhat cloudy, but our way went southward, towards the blue sky. Leaving Bürglen and the Schächenthal at our left, we entered the valley of the Reuss, which although surrounded with high rocks is very broad and fertile, exhibiting walnut-trees, other fruit-trees, and fir-trees of extraordinary beauty. We passed a tower of Gessler's, and the old fortress Zwing Uri. At our left we had the Surene glaciers, Windgalle, Bristenstock, and other snow mountains and glaciers. On the hills in front of us, lovely Alps. After passing through a varied landscape, we

[1] Marianne Mendelssohn, the wife of Alexander Mendelssohn, son of Joseph.

came to Amstäg, three hours from Altdorf, at the foot of the Gothard. Here the new Gothard road begins, which on this side is practicable for two hours, as far as Wasen, and on the Tessine side is finished. The road is worked into the rocks with the aid of gunpowder, sometimes on the right, sometimes on the left bank of the Reuss, splendidly built and strengthened by walls. Boldly arched bridges lead over the precipices. It is a gigantic construction, an everlasting monument for the Cantons of Uri and Tessine, and a grand illustration of the power of human perseverance, which can even bend the will of Nature. Behind Wasen vegetation gradually disappears, the valley grows narrower, the rocks grow steeper, and the Reuss flows rapidly and wildly. Near Göschenen, the only village on the whole way on the left bank of the Reuss, the formidable Göschener glacier is seen, the first which we approach so closely. As soon as you reach Schöllenen, the last trace of life and of human beings disappears. All round you see towering rocks, between which the Reuss has broken its awful bed. Here it quite loses the appearance of a stream, and forms one continual raging waterfall. Thus with every step the feeling of dread gains upon you, until at last, at the Devil's Bridge, it reaches its climax. You find yourself completely closed in by the rocks; in front of you, in several breaks, rushes down the immense flood of water; high above, leading across, the slender but safe bridge. The cutting wind, which towards evening blows here and is called the glacier-wind, the snowy peaks here and there standing forth, the twilight beginning to prevail in this "mountain-valley," and every other surrounding feature, contributed to increase the feeling of awe. A very little upwards from the Devil's Bridge is the "Uri Hole," a passage of about eighty feet through the rocks, and at its opening on the other side I stood almost petrified with wonder at what I beheld. Spread before my eyes was a lovely, quiet valley, with the most beautiful green meadows, bordered on both sides by green hills, with here and there a cottage; in the background the pretty villages of Andermatt and Ursern, higher up a chapel, in which the evening bell was ringing, on the right the Gothard, with its peak sharply delineated in the blue air; on the left the St.

Anne's glacier, with a continuation of the snowy mountain. At the side, the Furka, with its glacier, the Gothard glacier, and the Crispalt, where the Rhine has its source. Nothing left of the wild roaring of the stream, which here glides swiftly but softly over the rocky ground, not a trace of the horrible awe by which just before I had felt surrounded. Everywhere quiet, perfect peace, which dwells in this valley as if it never could leave it. I shall never forget the impression!

'We went a few hundred yards further across the meadows to have a better view of the Annenglacier, but the cold soon obliged us to return. The only characteristics of a higher region are the cold air you breathe and the want of vegetation. Except a few fir-trees near Andermatt, the whole soil is covered with beautiful meadows. You feel, however, no less powerfully affected by what you do *not* see than by the visible surroundings. The presentiment of the country stretching behind those mountains, the palpable vicinity of Italy, the trivial circumstance that all the peasant people have been in Italy, speak Italian, and greet the wanderer with the sweet sounds of that lovely language, all that touched me indescribably. If on that day I had been a *boy*, indeed I should have had to struggle against my inclination to do something rash. And yet, whilst on the one side I felt the most intense desire to see Italy, on the other I was burning to go by way of the Furka and Grimsel to the Hasli-thal, all which we might have done easily if it had been prearranged. That whole day I had calculated the possibility of ascending the Gothard, even if alone with Dominique,[1] in the evening; it only takes three hours from the Ursern valley, but it was impossible, and I had to give it up. At night, alone in my room, I passed an hour which I shall never forget. Yesterday morning's parting seemed very hard. I could not bear the thought of leaving the lovely, beautiful valley and going northward once more through that dreadful wilderness and the deafening noise of the stream. The valley had inexpressible charms in the morning light, the little chapel Mariahilf was suffused with a beautiful glow, the dew was sparkling on the meadows, and the glaciers gittered with a greenish light. Mount

[1] The guide.

Gothard lifted its head into the pure air. Nothing can be compared to the solemn quiet of this morning. I cannot tell you how deeply I was impressed. And then to turn one's back on all this delightful serenity and wind one's way again through the awful caverns and wild gorges! But in the clearness of the morning these too had lost their terrors, or at any rate impressed me much less awfully than they had done in the evening.

'For a good part of the way I walked quite by myself, revolving in my mind what I had seen and what had so much stirred my innermost feelings. In the distance I heard the sound of the morning bells in the village of Göschenen; it was very solemn and beautiful, and on the glacier behind the village lay the brightest sunshine. I must mention some beautiful girls to whom we talked at Wasen. On our way home we drove through Bürglen, once more visited Tell's chapel and the old ivy-mantled bower, and rested from the heat in the shade of the walnut-trees. The valley is uncommonly beautiful and romantic. With Marianne, Herr Heyse, and Rebecca I walked back to Altdorf by a pretty footpath.'

The travellers went by way of Interlaken and its obbligato excursions to the Wengern Alp, the Hasli-thal, and the Staubbach, mostly in bad weather, to Vevey, on the lake of Geneva. Here once more the plan of crossing the Alps and getting a glimpse of Italy was suggested, and again Fanny is full of joyous hopes.

'To-day again I write in a kind of intoxication! I never seem to have seen anything more beautiful than this lake and its scenery. Splendid weather withal, and if it remains so we are off the day after to-morrow to the Borromean Islands. Think of that, the Borromean Islands! I thank heaven that there must be our limit, for if we went still farther I believe I could not stand it—too much at a time for a poor earth-born! Fancy what our journey will be if this weather continues! Only follow our way on the map from the lake to Wallis, past Leuck, over the Simplon to the Lago Maggiore, and you will conceive that I feel as if I were going to be carried on the clouds to paradise. And I do not know why, but I fancy that on the islands something quite wonderful and unexpected will happen to us. With all this anticipation I am scarcely in a frame of mind for revert-

ing to my account of the three days we spent at Berne, and yet they too were very pleasant.'

Our travellers, after a visit to Chamouni, turned homeward, stopping a month at Frankfort on their way, in order to make acquaintance with Schelble, the director of the Cäcilien-Verein. Felix on this occasion extemporised very successfully. They further stopped at Weimar, to make the acquaintance of the Goethe family, by whom Felix had been so kindly received during his visit with Zelter. Goethe was never tired of listening to Felix when he was at the piano, and with the father talked almost exclusively about him. To Felix himself he said one day when something had happened to annoy him: 'I am Saul, and you are my David; when I am sad and dreary, come to me and cheer me with your music.' One evening he requested him to play one of Bach's fugues which young Frau von Goethe had mentioned. Felix did not know it by heart, only the theme was known to him, and on this he improvised a fugue. Goethe was enchanted, walked up to the mother, pressed her hand warmly, and exclaimed: 'A charming, delightful boy! Send him again soon, that I may get all the pleasure I can out of him.' Felix himself was fully conscious of the value of such praise, and, although the Weimar ladies took great pains to spoil and flatter him, he had a mind only for Goethe's love and satisfaction.

Such events at the age of Fanny and Felix have a vast influence on mental development. Fanny writes:—

'The effects of the journey on Felix showed themselves immediately after our return. He had grown much taller and stronger, both features and expression had developed themselves incredibly, and the difference in his way of wearing his hair (the beautiful long curls had been cut off) contributed not a little to change his appearance. His lovely *child's face* had disappeared, and his figure already showed a manliness very becoming to him. He was changed, but no less handsome than before.'

The journey was a subject of most intense interest for Aunt Henrietta at Paris. She entered into the plan with all her passionate nature, and in thought accompanied the travellers,

while her experience in teaching at the same time showed her its importance for the development of the children. One of her letters is too characteristic to be passed over:—

Dearest Leah, dearest brother, children, friends—I feel inclined to extend my greetings even to your servants,—I am *so* glad of your journey through the often but never sufficiently praised land of promise, that I should like, with Schiller, to 'embrace millions.' But in the universal embracing I would reserve you, dearest sister, *pour la bonne bouche*, for I have to thank you quite especially. They have sent me several letters from Berlin, addressed to your mother, Aunt Levy, and Marianne, and she promises to send me those I have not yet read. I love your letters, not only because they are fit to be printed and published as they are (that would be their least merit), but because they form a real bond for the dispersed members of the family. It is your influence that in a certain way obliges these members (I mean the Mendelssohn part of the family) not to forget each other completely, as they otherwise would, notwithstanding all their loves and friendships. Moreover, your letters are a true (not panorama but) diorama—a much more perfect work of art—showing us everything in the greatest possible exactness, and with all the changes of light and shade as the varying daylight produces them. We have a diorama at Paris just now, and one of the pictures represents the Sarnenthal, with a lake, and glaciers in the distance. I almost fancied, dear Leah, I saw you on the bank of the lake, and the others on the surrounding mountains. For I am sure that when the 'wild huntsman with his followers' disdains any repose, you prefer to remain in some quiet valley and let your children tell you what they have seen up there on the heights. And if I belonged to your party I should stay below with you, for I praise the mountains only because they form valleys; indeed that is all I know of them, for I never have been at the top of one. How could we, my dear, in our cradles by the big stove have dreamt of anything beyond balls, or at the utmost a man, being formed of snow? And whatever we may have read in later times about Switzerland, how it dwindles into nothing when compared with the reality! How

wonderfully the mind is refreshed and elevated, and one's gratitude called out on that blessed soil, in that pure air, and in the presence of such grand and lovely scenery! I do not this moment remember in which part of Switzerland the owner of a spot commanding a most beautiful view put up a pillar bearing the inscription, 'O nation, praise the Lord.' The idea seemed to me excellent.

I really love you the more, dear Leah, for having overcome your dislike of travelling. At the same time it is impossible to imagine anything more agreeable than your arrangements and your company. Not like gipsies do you travel, but like princes —poets, artists, and princes all in one! What may you have thought of the rich, well-ordered territory of Berne! what of the dark-blue lake of Geneva with its beautiful surroundings! As to the Mont Blanc, I hope, dear Leah, that you will content yourself with admiring it through your glasses from a window of the Sécheron. I wish I may find that you agree with me in preferring *German* Switzerland! I like the grand simplicity of those parts much better. Of course you have seen the lake of Thun, and Interlaken?

I was very glad to read some accounts of Rebecca in your letter to your mother. Fanny Sebastiani and I were just going to reproach you for not mentioning the little girl.

Now for you, my Felix, you are quite a hero! Your pilgrimage from Potsdam to Grosskreuz has touched my innermost soul. I hope, however, that after having thus shown your independent spirit and vigorous nature you will always hold fast to some coat-tail or other, and not give us any further alarm. Let me especially recommend to you a certain confectioner, who lives at Berne, behind the parish church. It is not a shop, only a room, on the ground floor. You will thank me for this recommendation, for the man composes beautiful works in his way. Fill your pockets with them and eat them on the 'Platform,' as they call it, at Berne, some bright morning, with the view of the magnificent snow-mountains of the Oberland, and, like all who love you, rejoice in your existence. God bless you, my dear brown Felix!

You, my dear Fanny, ought to have a letter of your own:

yours has well deserved it. But you are better employed than reading my epistle. How thankful you must feel to your dear mother for having made up her mind for this journey, and how you must love your father for arranging it! Be very joyful and happy, and if you cannot be actually merry think of Goethe's words, 'Life also needs dark leaves in its wreath.' But I hope you will enjoy everything very thoroughly, without too much reflecting whether you have the full profit of it. With a mind so well prepared as yours, the true result of a journey shows itself afterwards like the effects of a mineral bath. God keep and preserve you in health and spirits!

I should have liked to send you for this journey one of those ridiculous dresses that they wear in Paris this summer. They are very wide loose carters' shirts, called *blouses*, and decorated, like them, at the throat and on the shoulders with embroidery, no shape whatever, and fastened round the waist by a leather belt. But you describe yourself as so stout that I had not the courage to send you one. Fanny Sebastiani does not wear one for the same reason: children and sylphs alone look pretty in them.

Now with all my chattering I have barely room left to greet *you*, my dear thrice-happy patriarch! You are quite in your element, migrating through the country, like Abraham the first, at the head of your numerous family! When I think of it, and know that you have left no cares behind you and can watch over them all with your own eyes, I am almost as glad as you must be yourself. Now, God bless you and your dear caravan!

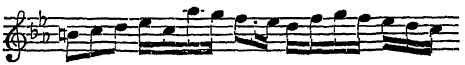
LEIPZIGER STRASSE No. 3.

After their return each took up his accustomed occupations, and earnest work was continued. Felix's musical talent developed rapidly during the next few years, and with it that of his sister Fanny. The intimate friendship between brother and sister, never alloyed by any jealous or envious feeling, remained to the end of their days—'They are really vain and proud of one another,' their mother has been heard to say. Fanny writes in 1822: 'Up to the present moment I possess his unbounded confidence. I have watched the progress of his talent step by step, and may say I have contributed to his development. I have always been his only musical adviser, and he never writes down a thought before submitting it to my judgment. For instance, I have known his operas by heart before a note was written.' Felix's time through all his life was spent in untiring activity; for besides his scientific work, he devoted much time and application to drawing. Although of course he was not equally gifted for drawing as for music, he attained as an amateur a high degree of perfection, and especially in the latter years of his life. From his last journey to Switzerland in 1847 he brought home some water-colour sketches, of which no artist need have been ashamed. But his musical activity even in those early years of boyhood is extraordinary, as we see in a small unpublished biography of Felix by Fanny, which contains a catalogue of his compositions in every year. Thus for 1822, the year of the great journey, when one might fancy not much time for working remained, the list is the following: 1, the 66th Psalm for three female voices; 2, concerto in A minor for the piano; 3, two songs for male voices; 4, three songs; 5, three fugues for the piano; 6, quartet for piano, violin, alto,

and two bass (C minor composed at Geneva, first printed work); 7, symphonies for two violins, alto and bass; 8, one act of the opera 'The Two Nephews'; 9, Jube Domine (C major), for Schelble's Cäcilien-Verein at Frankfort; 10, a violin concerto (for Rietz); 11, Magnificat, with instruments; 12, Gloria, with instruments. Felix appeared in public for the first time in a concert of Gugel's on October 24, 1818, and for the second time in a concert given by Aloys Schmitt on March 31, 1822. In the same year, on December 5, he played in Berlin at a concert of Mme. Milder's. About this time also the Sunday *matinées* began which in later years at Fanny Hensel's acquired such importance and extent. For the present, and whilst the parents (then on the new Promenade) could but command a limited space for the purpose, only a small circle of friends came together. Here Felix's compositions were performed, the children got accustomed to play before an audience, and had an opportunity of hearing other people's judgment. Even then all musicians of distinction passing through Berlin requested to be admitted at these musical entertainments; for instance, in 1823, Kalkbrenner, about whom Fanny writes: 'He heard a good many of Felix's compositions, praised with taste, and blamed candidly and amiably. We hear him often, and try to learn from him. His playing unites a variety of good qualities: precision, clearness, expression, the greatest facility, and most untiring power and energy. He is a clever musician, with most extensive knowledge. In addition to his talent, he is an accomplished, amiable gentleman, and to blame or praise more agreeably than he does is not possible.'

In the same year Abraham, with his sons Felix and Paul, made a journey to Silesia. At Breslau Felix writes:—

'Ἦμος δ' ἠριγένεια' φάνη ῥοδοδάκτυλος ἠώς, we all went to the church to hear Berner play. First he took off his coat and put on a light one instead, then he asked me to write down a theme for him, and then he began. He took the low C in the pedal, and then threw himself with all his might upon the manual, and after some runs began a theme on the manual. I had no idea that it could be played on the pedals, for it was as follows:—



but he soon began with his feet, and carried it out with both manual and pedals. After he had thoroughly developed it, he began my theme on the pedals, carried it out for a short time, then took it on the pedals in augmentation, put a fine counter subject with it, and then worked up both themes splendidly. He has wonderful execution on the pedals. When he had done he drank some glasses of wine which he had brought with him, and sat down again on the organ-seat. He then played variations in Vogel's manner, which did not please me so well as his former playing, although they also were very beautiful.

The church gradually filled, and the people were much surprised to hear Berner, for he had made all Breslau believe that he had gone to some watering-place; but there he was playing the organ at St. Elisabeth's, and they could not make it out at all. After another little drop, he brought out some variations of his own on the chorale 'Vom Himmelhoch,' which are very beautiful. The last variation is a fugue the theme of which is the chorale in diminution. He played it on the middle manual. At length it appeared as if he were about to close; he brought in the theme *alla stretta*, struck the chord of the dominant, and then suddenly began the simple chorale with the whole power of the organ on the lower manual, which was coupled, then modulated splendidly on the melody, and so ended. It had a heavenly effect as the chorale came out with all its might. The sounds streamed out of the organ from all sides. That tired him very much, so that he had to take two or three glasses of wine. But soon he sat down again and played variations on 'God save the King,' in which he treated the theme first in the Phrygian and then in the Æolian mode, and towards the end gave it on the full organ, which had just as fine an effect as before. Thus the organ-concert ended, and Berner was very tired. The people left the church, and he made an end of the bottle of wine. Then he showed me the inside of the organ itself. Shot and shell have struck many pipes, so that they are useless.

We talked for some time, father, he, and I. Berner told us of some funny practical jokes of his, and then we went to dine, taking him with us. While he is playing a choir boy stands by him and draws out and pushes in such stops as he touches lightly with his finger in the midst of his playing.

Now enough of Phrygian, Æolian, dominant, stops, pipes, manuals, pedals, valves, 32 feet, mixture, concerts, wine-bottles, glasses, fugues, and augmentation.

At Reinerz Felix was asked to play at a charity-concert. The rehearsal began three hours before the concert, and a concerto by Mozart was to be played by Felix. After going over the first solo for about an hour, he saw the impossibility of going on in this way. The double-bass which supplied the violoncello was not in time, most instruments were entirely missing, and the rest were played by worthy amateurs of the town, who could neither keep tune nor time—it was a dreadful confusion. Felix therefore proposed to extemporise, made the schoolmaster mention the reason of the change of programme, selected some themes from Mozart and Weber, and played with great success. Directly after the concert he left the town, and in getting into the carriage received a nosegay from a pretty girl. 'A princess,' Leah writes to Hensel in Rome, 'whose husband is *fanatico per la musica*, invited them to spend a few days at her estate, or, if that was impossible, to lend her some of Felix's compositions, which she would copy with her own princely hands. You are too well acquainted with the illiberality of my liberal not to guess that court service does not suit his free spirit.'

On February 3, 1824, Felix's fifteenth birthday, the first orchestral rehearsal of his opera 'The Two Nephews' took place. The text was written by Caspar, a well-known physician. Zelter made use of the opportunity to arrange a little ceremony in his way. When at supper one of the amateur performers proposed Felix's health, Zelter took his hand and placed him in front of the company, with the words: 'My dear boy, from this day you are no longer an apprentice, but an independent member of the brotherhood of musicians. I proclaim you inde-

pendent in the name of Mozart, Haydn, and old father Bach.' He then embraced the boy, and kissed him heartily. This proclamation of independence was now merrily toasted, and solemnised by songs of Zelter's and by *Tafellieder*. The opera was successfully acted at the house of the parents, but was only looked upon in the light of an attempt and put by. Felix soon began a second, on a much larger scale, called 'The Wedding of Camacho,' on the well-known episode from Don Quixote. We shall have to speak of it afterwards.

In the year 1825 an event happened which had a great influence on the development of the children and on the life of the family for generations, and which we have therefore chosen as the heading of this chapter: Abraham purchased the beautiful property at the Leipziger Strasse No. 3. In this delightful house and garden he and his wife passed the rest of their days; there Fanny married, and also lived till her death. To the members of the family this house was not a piece of property of a certain value, or mere dead bricks and mortar, but a living individuality, one of themselves, sympathising with and sharing their happiness, and considered by them and their nearest friends somehow as the representative of the family. In this sense Felix often uses the expression 'Leipziger Strasse 3,' and in this sense they all loved it and mourned for its loss when, after the deaths of Fanny and Felix, it was sold, and became the Upper Chamber of the Prussian Parliament.

The street front of the house has remained unchanged. The rooms were stately, large, and lofty, built with that delightful spaciousness which architects have almost entirely given up since the price of ground has become so high, and for which kind of comfort either the taste or the means have almost entirely disappeared. One room especially, overlooking the court, and opening by means of three arches into an adjoining apartment, was beautiful, and most suitable for theatrical representations. For many, many years, at Christmas, and on birthdays and other festive occasions, this was the scene of delightful performances, overflowing with wit and humour. Generally it was Leah's sitting-room. The windows opened upon a very spacious court, surrounded by low side-buildings, and closed by

a one-storied garden-house, over which looked the tops of ancient trees. In this garden-house Fanny and Hensel lived after their marriage. It has since been pulled down, to make room for the session-chamber of the Prussian House of Lords. In winter it had great drawbacks: the apartments were cold and damp, each room was a thoroughfare, and, as the house was only one room deep, there was no accumulation of warmth. Double windows were at that time hardly known at Berlin, and the garden-house was not provided with them. Quantities of water flowed down daily from the frozen panes, and necessitated a constant wiping up. The temperature of the rooms in winter seldom got beyond 61° Fahrenheit.

But in summer the house was perfectly delightful. The windows were embowered in vines, and all opened on to the garden, with its blooming lilacs and avenues of stately old trees! And for all times of the year it had certain special advantages, especially complete quiet and silence. The large court and high front building kept off every sound; in the garden-house, no more than 100 yards away from the noisy street, you lived as in the deepest loneliness of a forest—*vis-à-vis*, the magnificent trees of the garden, with merrily twittering birds, no lodger above or below, after the noise of streets the quietest and almost rural seclusion, and at your windows green leaves. The centre part of the house, and its most invaluable and beautiful portion, consisted in a very spacious hall, too large to be called a drawing-room. There was space in it for several hundred people, and it had on the garden side a movable glass wall, interrupted by pillars, so that the hall could be changed into an open portico. The walls and ceiling (a flat cupola) were covered with fantastic fresco-paintings. This was the real scene of the Sunday *matinées*. The hall commanded a view of the garden—or rather the park—(about seven acres), which touched the gardens of Prince Albrecht; in Frederick the Great's time it had been a part of the Thiergarten, and was therefore rich in most beautiful old trees. Leah wrote to Hensel (then at Rome) about the intended purchase of the property, February 1, 1825: 'You will be much surprised to hear that my husband has serious intentions of settling here definitely in a house of his own. The property, which might be

turned into something very beautiful, tempts him much. The house indeed is at present in that state of decay and neglect that will always arise from there being many owners (it belonging to the V. d. Reck family) and no common interests. A great deal must be spent on making it habitable. But the garden is quite a park, with splendid trees, a field, grass-plots, and a delightful summer residence, and this alone tempts both my husband and myself.' The friends of the family at first did not like the change at all, and complained that the Mendelssohns were moving out of the world, into regions where grass grew on the pavement; for the Potsdam gate was then the Ultima Thule, at which Berlin geography terminated.

In this house and garden arose a singularly beautiful, poetic life. The circle of friends then formed, with few exceptions, remained in personal intercourse, or correspondence, until death, one by one, called them off. The Hanoverian Klingemann, a diplomatist, a very refined, poetic nature, author of the text of 'Son and Stranger' (to be mentioned afterwards), was one of the most prominent and most faithful of the circle. The ties of friendship which united him to the family were strengthened by Felix's and Hensel's frequent visits to London, where Klingemann was attached to the Hanoverian legation, and by a constant animated correspondence. Louis Heydemann and his brother, Wilhelm Horn, son of a famous physician, and himself one likewise, Edward Rietz the violinist, and for a long time especially Marx, then editor of the Berlin *Musikalische Zeitung*, were Felix's more intimate friends. Marx, a man of great genius, was the champion of a new school in music, which rallied round the flag of Beethoven, and contributed not a little to make the works of that great master known. He was truly fond of Felix, and the two endeavoured in their enthusiasm to approach each other by exchanging opinions, which at first differed widely.

Moscheles visited Berlin in the autumn of 1824, and Felix readily acknowledged his extraordinary execution, and the grace, elegance, and coquetry of his playing, and in those respects profited by Moscheles, who, indeed, never allowed these technical qualities to be too prominent. Moscheles, on the other hand,

fully appreciated Felix's talent, and a lasting friendship began between the two. Spohr's presence at Berlin had likewise a great influence on Felix. He had come to Berlin personally to superintend the representation of 'Jessonda,' and the public received him and his opera with even greater applause for the obstacles thrown in his way by Spontini. Spohr was a frequent visitor at the Mendelssohns', improving upon the acquaintance made at Cassel in 1822.

A journey to Paris in March 1825 with his father, undertaken for the purpose of fetching Henrietta back to Germany, brought Felix into contact with a great number of eminent musicians, at that time there assembled: Hummel, Moscheles, Kalkbrenner, Pixis, Rode, Baillot, Kreutzer, Cherubini, Rossini, Paer, Meyerbeer, Plantade, Lafont, and many others, who often met in the same *salon* and the same opera-box. But the meanness, jealousy, and enviousness of many of these men made a repulsive impression on Felix, whose whole nature was so perfectly different, and who never, even in later times, liked Paris, or Parisian music.

He disliked both the good and bad parts of the musical system then cultivated there. The brilliancy and piquancy by which some musicians tried to gain popularity had no charms for him; their intrigues, their ignorance of the great German masters, their careless, negligent way of working, offended him, and the very civility which the musicians showed to him personally could not make him forget those faults. With Cherubini alone he appears to have sympathised.

In a letter on April 6 he expressed himself on Parisian persons and affairs with a violence and acerbity not generally a part of his character. The answers of his mother and sisters of course did not fail to contradict him in many points. The following extracts from his letters may give an idea of his opinions:—

Felix to the Family.

Paris: March 23, 1825.

How shall I manage to write a regular and sensible letter on the first morning I spend in Paris? I am far too much

astonished, curious, and confused. But as I have promised to send a diary to Berlin, I will begin forthwith by telling you that we entered Paris yesterday, March 22, at eight o'clock in the evening. After having passed the 'barrier de Pantin' our horses took us at full speed for more than a quarter of an hour through a new part of the town, which father had not seen before, the Faubourg St. Lazare. In some places it still looks rather desolate and disordered, but most houses are finished. We then came into the old town, and at last to the Boulevard. The flow of life and industry, the noise, rattling, shouting, and merry-making in the streets, are something wonderful. The shops are all completely lighted with gas, and so are the streets, where you might easily read. The noise and light are about the same as in Berlin at an illumination.

Leo and Meyer called on us early this morning, and seemed astonished not to find me jump on their knees, upset a few chairs, and indulge in screams, etc. We went to see aunt Jette, and met her in the street coming to us. Her gentle, earnest, lively, and kind manner impressed me at once. And how cleverly she talks! I am glad we shall bring her home to you!

April 1, 1825.

On Monday morning I called on Hummel, and found Onslow and Boucher with him; he did not at first recognise me, but when he heard my name he behaved like mad, embraced me a hundred times, ran about the room, roared and cried, made an exaggerated, foolish speech about me to Onslow, and then ran away with me to see father. But when we found father had gone out, he made such a noise in the hotel that all the people came to see what was the matter. He then took his leave, ran back after me upstairs, embraced me, etc. Yesterday morning he came rumbling in with four porters and brought up his wife's grand piano, taking home our bad instrument instead.

Paris: April 20.

To appease your wrath, I will tell you that we were last night in the Feydeau theatre, where we saw the last act of an opera by Catel, 'L'Aubergiste,' and 'Léocadie,' by Auber. The

theatre is spacious, cheerful, and pretty; the orchestra very good. Although the violins are not of the same excellence as in the opera-bouffe, the basses, wind instruments, and the *ensemble* are better. The conductor stands in the middle. The singers sing without much voice, but not badly; their acting is quick and animated, and everything goes well together. But now about the principal thing, the composition! I will not speak of the first opera, for I only heard half of it, and that was very weak and tedious, although not without some light, pretty melody. But famous Auber's famous 'Léocadie'! You cannot imagine anything more miserable. The subject, taken from a bad novel of Cervantes, is made into a clumsy opera-libretto, and I should not have believed that such an improper, vulgar piece could have any chance of success with a French public, who have so much fine feeling and tact. To this novel, which dates from the rude, wild period of Cervantes, Auber has made miserably tame music—not to say that there is no fire, no substance, no life, no originality to be found in the opera; that it is connected by reminiscences of Cherubini and Rossini alternately; that it shows no earnestness, not a spark of passion; that at the most critical moments the singers have to perform shakes, quavers, passages. But a gray-haired man, a pupil of Cherubini's and the darling of the public, ought at least to be able to orchestrate, in our times especially, when the publication of the scores of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven has made that task so easy. Far from it. Fancy that among the numerous music-pieces of the opera there are perhaps three in which the piccolo does not play the principal part! The overture begins with a tremulando on the stringed instruments, and then the piccolo instantly begins on the roof and the bassoon in the cellar, and blow away at a melody; in the theme of the allegro the stringed instruments play the Spanish accompaniment, and the flute again drawls out a melody. Léocadie's first melancholy air, 'Pauvre Léocadie, il vaudrait mieux mourir,' is again appropriately accompanied by the piccolo. This little instrument serves to illustrate the fury of the brother, the pain of the lover, the joy of the peasant girl; in short, the whole opera might be transcribed for two flutes and a Jew's harp *ad libitum*. Alas!

You say I should try and convert the people here, and teach Onslow and Reicha to love Beethoven and Sebastian Bach. That is just what I am endeavouring to do. But remember, my dear child, that these people do not know a single note of 'Fidelio,' and believe Bach to be a mere old-fashioned wig stuffed with learning. I played the overture to 'Fidelio' to Onslow on a bad piano, and he was quite distracted, scratched his head, added the instruments as he imagined them, shouted the air, in short was quite mad with delight. The other day, at the request of Kalkbrenner, I played the organ preludes in E minor and B minor. My audience pronounced them both 'wonderfully pretty,' and one of them remarked that the beginning of the prelude in A minor was very much like a favourite duet in an opera by Monsigny. Anybody might have knocked me down with a feather.

Rode persists in his refusal to touch a violin. But the other day I played my quartet in B minor at Mme. Kiené's, with Baillot, Mial, and Norblin. Baillot was rather confused at the beginning, and played even carelessly, but at one passage in the first part of the first movement he caught fire, and played the rest of the movement and the whole adagio very well and with much vigour. Then came the scherzo; and he must have liked the beginning, for now he began to play and hurry in earnest, the others after him, and I trying in vain to stop them. But who can stop three runaway Frenchmen? And so they took me with them, madder and madder, and faster and louder. Baillot especially, at a place near the end, where the theme of the trio is taken up against the time, played fearfully loud; and as it had happened to him to make a mistake several times before, he got into a perfect rage with himself. When he had finished, he said nothing but, 'Encore une fois ce morceau.' Now everything went on smoothly, but wilder even than before. In the place quite near the end, where the theme in B minor comes in once more fortissimo, Baillot produced a hurricane in the strings that put me in fright of my own quartet. And as soon as it was finished, he came up to me, again without saying a word, and embraced me twice as if he wanted to crush me. Rode was also very much pleased,

and a long while afterwards said again, 'Bravo, mein schatz!' (Bravo, my precious!) *in German.*

The Berlin people, however, were not satisfied, and did not cease in their letters to stand up for (in their opinion) poor, ill-treated Paris. Felix was not to be persuaded. On the 9th of May he writes to his sister Fanny:—

'Your last letter made me somewhat furious, and I resolved to scold you a bit; nor will I let you off, although time, that kind divinity, may have softened my temper and poured some balm into the wounds inflicted on you by my fiery wrath. You talk of prejudice and prepossession, about being morose and grumbling, and about the 'land flowing with milk and honey,' as you call this city. Do consider a little. Are you in Paris, or am I? Now I really ought to know better than you! It is my way, to let my judgment of music be influenced by prejudice! But suppose it were, is Rode prejudiced when he says to me, "C'est ici une dégringolade musicale"? Is Neukomm prejudiced who says, "Ce n'est pas ici le pays des orchestres"? Is Herz prejudiced when he says, "Here the public can only understand and enjoy variations"? And are 10,000 others prejudiced who abuse Paris? It is you, you alone who are so prepossessed, that you believe more in the reality of the lovely image of Paris as an Eldorado, conceived in your own mind, than that of my impartial accounts. Read but the *Constitutionnel*: what else is performed in the Italian Opera but Rossini? Read the music catalogue: what else is published, what else is sold, but romances and potpourris? Come and hear "Alceste," come and hear "Robin des Bois,"[1] hear the *soirées* (which, by-the-by, you have confounded with *salons*; *soirées* being concerts for money, and *salons* parties), hear the music in the Chapel Royal, and *then* form your opinion and scold me, but not now, when *you* are prepossessed and completely blinded by prejudice!!!'

In May they returned home with Henrietta, on their way paying a visit to Goethe, as they had also done in going to Paris.

[1] French version of the *Freischütz.*

We must not omit mentioning the literary events of those times, watched and received as they were with enthusiasm by the young people. It need not be said that the grandchildren of Moses Mendelssohn were well acquainted with Lessing's writings, nor that to the friend and guest of Goethe 'Werther' and 'Faust' were 'brilliant meteors,' as Fanny expresses herself. Fanny's and Felix's letters from Switzerland prove that Schiller's masterpieces were ever present to their minds. But two authors especially exercised a great influence on the Mendelssohn children and their circle of friends—Jean Paul and Shakespeare. Börne has said the most beautiful and Heine the most witty things about Jean Paul in his 'Romantic School.' Rebecca once wrote about him: 'You want me to read Hesperus when I am very sad. Indeed I shall not follow your advice. Jean Paul does not help the weary and heavy-laden to bear their cross; he only tells them what they like to hear, and makes their burden heavier by weakening their strength. But my telling you this avails nothing: you are just in that age, or rather youth, when there is no writer but Jean Paul, when his style, his irony, are imitated, when youths and maidens wish not to grow stout, in order to be more like Victor, Clotilde, and Liane, and if possible to die a little early, but only for a short time! If I wanted to get rid of sadness by reading, I should choose Lessing, or Mendelssohn, or history, and find consolation in the example of men who have struggled against an adverse fate and overcome it, and have gained not an ironical but a virtuous serenity of mind, resignation and strength to continue the fight. But there is that slight difference between us that I am as near forty as you are near twenty. And if I did not know the charms of Jean Paul in youth, I would surprise you in your rural solitude, and condemn the whole Hesperus to an *auto da fé.*

'Your remark about the likeness between Jean Paul's Clotilde and X. reminds me of a little story I would tell you if I did not know you would be offended. But I will tell you after all. A deaf and dumb pupil of Professor Wach's once painted a Madonna who was the living image of Wach. He accounted for it by explaining that Wach was his ideal, and so was the

Madonna, consequently the Madonna had to be like Wach. The moral I need not add, but pray do not be angry. When your mother and I were young, Victor in Hesperus resembled Dr. J., now Counsellor of State and Conservative leader.'

The Mendelssohn children had no need to read Jean Paul for consolation, and yet there is a period in youth when everybody, even the happiest, longs for a feeling of suffering, and 'to die a little early, but only for a short time.' Anyhow, and whatever peculiarity of the poet each may have preferred, the fact is that they all admired him enthusiastically and lastingly. In Felix's letters, even the later ones, this predilection is often expressed.

Next to Jean Paul they loved Shakespeare. With the Schlegel-Tieck translation Shakespeare's plays were for the first time made accessible to Germany in an adequate form. The young people had not then sufficient knowledge of English to be able to read Shakespeare in the original. The impression produced was deep indeed; the tragedies, but even more the comedies, and especially the 'Midsummer-night's Dream,' were the joy of the Mendelssohn children. By a singular coincidence, in that very year 1826, in their lovely garden, favoured by the most beautiful weather, they themselves led a fantastic, dream-like life. In the garden-house lived an old lady with beautiful and amiable nieces and granddaughters. Fanny and Rebecca were intimately acquainted with these girls, Felix and his friends joined them, and the summer months were like one uninterrupted festival day, full of poetry, music, merry games, ingenious practical jokes, disguises, and representations. Writing materials and paper were laid out in one of the summer-houses, on which everybody wrote down any droll or pretty thing that occurred to him. This formed a *Garden-Times*, which was continued in winter under the name of *Tea-and-Snow-Times*, and contained many charming things, both serious and playful. Even the older people, Abraham, Zelter, Humboldt, were not above contributing to, or at least joining and enjoying, sports of such a peculiar and tasteful kind. The whole life had undoubtedly a higher and loftier tendency, a more idyllic colouring, more poetry, than is often met with. Nature and art, wit,

heart, and mind, the high flow of Felix's genius, all this contributed to give a colouring to their doings, and on the other hand this wonderful life gave a new impulse to his creative spirit. A vast and rapid change took place within him, and several remarkable works followed in quick succession, widely different from the compositions of his childhood. First came the Ottetto, destined as a birthday present for Rietz. The ethereal, fanciful, and spirit-like scherzo in this is something quite new. He tried to set to music the stanza from the Walpurgis-night Dream in 'Faust':—

> The flight of the clouds and the veil of mist
> Are lighted from above.
> A breeze in the leaves, a wind in the reeds,
> And all has vanished.

'And he has been really successful,' says Fanny of this Ottetto, in her biography of Felix. 'To me alone he told his idea: the whole piece is to be played staccato and pianissimo, the tremulandos coming in now and then, the trills passing away with the quickness of lightning; everything new and strange, and at the same time most insinuating and pleasing, one feels so near the world of spirits, carried away in the air, half inclined to snatch up a broomstick and follow the aërial procession. At the end the first violin takes a flight with a feather-like lightness, and—all has vanished.'

But the scherzo of the ottetto was only the precursor of a larger work of similar description. The most brilliant result of that strangely poetic frame of mind is the overture to the 'Midsummer-night's Dream.' We may consider it as a piece of Mendelssohn's own life, for it is as much the result as the events of the year 1826 in the Mendelssohn house as of the influence of Shakespeare; and if we are not very much mistaken, this origin is just what lends such a singular charm to the overture. The circumstance that it was a product of Mendelssohn's inmost nature may explain the fact, perhaps the only one of the kind on record in music, that twenty years afterwards the composer, taking up this work of his youth, could write the music to the Midsummer-night's Dream without changing a

note of the overture: it was truly Shakespearian, and truly Mendelssohnian, and therefore the music could only continue in the same spirit.

This was perhaps the happiest time in the life of Abraham Mendelssohn. His worldly affairs were prosperous, and had a firm basis in the possession of one of the finest properties in Berlin: a beloved, clever, and charming wife, the faithful partner of his joys and sorrows through long years; all his children growing up with beautiful promises; Felix past the period of hesitation, and on a safe way to the highest station a man can reach, well-deserved fame in art; Fanny his equal in gifts and talent, yet desiring nothing but modestly to remain within the bounds nature has set to woman; Rebecca growing up a beautiful, clever girl, eminently gifted, and eclipsed only by the uncommon talent of her elder brother and sister; Paul good and industrious, and also very musical, all of them healthy in body and mind, and united by a rare affection; a circle of friends embracing the most remarkable clever men of various stations in life, and the most promising youths of Berlin; a house frequented, known, and loved by so many in the whole world of culture—such was the position of Abraham Mendelssohn in the year 1826.

In February 1827 Felix undertook a journey to Stettin, for a performance of his Midsummer-night's Dream overture, and was extremely well received. On the way back the diligence was upset, and he showed his presence of mind; for whilst nobody knew what to do, he rode back on one of the carriage horses as far as a German mile through a bitter cold night, and fetched assistance. At Berlin very onerous work awaited him: he had to superintend the mounting of his opera 'The Wedding of Camacho,' and for the first time experienced the sufferings of a composer for the stage. The narrow-mindedness of the manager, the intrigues behind the curtain, the business, often annoying, with the actors and rehearsals, all this, even if at first amusing, soon became very tedious. The opera was performed on the 29th of April. It is difficult to state how it was received, as there was no second representation. Upon the whole, it enjoyed probably but a *succès d'estime*. Felix, it

is true, was called for, and his family and friends looked upon the representation as a success. But his own good sense was not deceived: he was quite disheartened, and came home late and much disturbed. Illnesses and other obstacles, real or pretended, prevented a repetition several times appointed to take place, and the whole affair had for the moment a very bad influence on his mind and even on his health. Moreover, he was deeply affected by the death of a friend of his own age, August Hanstein. But with a nature so thoroughly healthy, lively, and strong as his, periods of relaxation and depression could not last long. At Whitsuntide he spent a few happy days at Sakrow, an estate near Potsdam belonging to the Magnus family, and there composed the words and music of a song which afterwards became the theme of the A minor quartet. In the summer he made a beautiful holiday excursion with some friends to the Harz Mountains, Franconia, Bavaria, Baden, and the Rhine, where he enjoyed the vintage with his uncle, Joseph Mendelssohn, at Horchheim, near Coblenz. The letters he wrote home are full of healthy life and spirits, as the following extracts may show:—

'We began to ascend the Brocken at half past two o'clock through the Ilsenthal, accompanied by a gray-haired old guide from Wernigerode. The sun shone brightly and the day was warm. We passed the Ilsenstein with much pleasure. Heydemann stood on a stone in the middle of the brook, with his hand in the water, and then took out a pebble and showed how that made the water take a different course: all this nonsense we expressed in Ritter phraseology. Magnus[1] walked foremost, whistling and saying he liked this. Rietz muttered, 'This is glorious!' and as the old guide was rather heavily laden with our four cloaks, we felt of course too kindly disposed by the pleasure we enjoyed not to take the burden from him, and carry it in the sweat of our own brows. That was our first mistake; for the old boy took a flask of brandy out of his pocket and drank our health—an unfortunate proceeding, which it is probable he repeated pretty often. After two hours' good climbing, and

[1] The well-known physician Gustav Magnus.

when the sky was beginning to be covered with clouds, he suddenly made a stop, and said, laughing, "Do you know the news? We have completely lost our way, and must go back a quarter of an hour, and then I shall bring you on the right way." I smelt a rat at once, and used strong language. 'Errare humanum' was Heydemann's remark. We went back, the guide began to talk nonsense, and tumbled about: he did not know the way at all, and was quite useless, and he wanted to persuade us that it was very nice in the forest, and so on. We then followed our own instinct, and after a short time saw a house. We all greeted it with a cheer, ran up to it, and knocked. No answer, the door locked, the windows closed, not a soul in the place. We consult our guide: he does not know the house, has never seen it, but believes we ought to turn to the right. Evening was coming on, and our spirits began to sink. We looked at our map of the Harz. "Here we are," says one. "No, here;" "No, here!" In short, we did not agree, and again followed the guide, who led us down a tiresome steep path, maintaining all the while we must soon be on the Brocken. At last he confessed that he did not know the way and had never been there before. We mounted on a block of granite and looked about us with the telescope—it began to rain! As we could see nothing, we followed our path, which began to get wet, and slippery, and soft. It got dark, the rain fell in torrents, and no human being was to be discovered. A little boy with axes and a sawing-block comes up from the valley. We surround him, and ask where we are. "Half an hour from Ilsenburg!!!" is his answer. We inquire after the abandoned house. "A deserted hunting-box, only an hour and a half from the summit of the Brocken." Our anger now knew no bounds; we made a rush at the guide with our sticks; but as he only took off his hat, smiled, and said, "Hit me if you choose, what do I care?" we contented ourselves with taking back our things and sending him away. He instantly disappeared. Köhler is his name, deuce take him! Through pouring rain, after four hours' walking we got back to Ilsenburg.'

Erbich (a poor little place): August 31, 1827.
A lovely moon-night.

If three of the most remarkable families of Berlin knew that three of their most remarkable sons are roving on the roads at night with carriers, peasants, and tramps, and exchanging biographies with them, they would be dreadfully distracted. But don't! for your sons are very jolly.

Erbich! Even father, who has travelled so much, does not know the place, nor is it marked on any map, and so Paul does not know it; nor was it built at the time of the Greeks, and therefore Rebecca does not know it; nor is it either in Leipziger Strasse No. 3 or in Italy, and therefore mother and Fanny do not know it. It is a miserable village with an inn, which we three from pure malice call heavenly. We had on our travelling maps mistaken four (German) miles for two, and after walking in the moonlight an hour and a half, at last we came to a village called Büdenbach, which possessed an inn much praised by the guides. The landlord could not give us a room, and we were to pass the night on the benches with three carriers in blue coats, whom we found eating mutton and smoking their pipes. To make up for this privilege the landlord could promise us no guide to Rudolstadt for to-morrow, and nothing to eat for to-night. At this Magnus got furious and decamped. We walked out of the village and along a brook edged with willows, across a stubble field here and there interrupted by marshy ground, to Erbich. Three cheers for Erbich! Here we have a room, where we can sleep *solus* on the benches, and to-morrow morning we are off on a cart, the driver of which has promised us quite a marvellous trot into Franconia. Here too they refused at first to take us in, there being no fire in the room; but finally we were conducted up a narrow staircase to our room, all the four walls of which are garnished with benches. In a corner stands mine host's bed, in which none of us will sleep, perhaps from generosity; in another corner are three gigantic piles of dough for bread and cake. The landlady made us swear by our beards not to touch them. (We have not shaved since Berlin, and Magnus is wonderful.) The rest of the furni-

ture consists of several paintings (worth about threepence), and a hook for a chandelier. At the door hangs a hog's bladder. *Summa summarum*, a perfect drawing-room.

In all the towns, hamlets, and villages we go through with our pilgrim-staffs we cause great excitement; the girls come to the windows, and the street-boys follow us laughing for three streets at least—a proof of popularity and clean linen!

We get on together quite as well as we enjoy ourselves, and this is saying a great deal. Our talk is alternately of musicians, fevers, and Homer, so each has his own topic, and in a student-song and refrain we all join in one. The country is most lovely; to-day we walked through the Thüringen forest, near Sondershausen, which has splendid beeches and massive oaks, here and there overshadowing a well from which Heydemann fills his flask. Then we pass a while looking, and drawing, and comparing. So our grave and merry occasions are both equally sweet, and by means of such variety we shall not get tired of or exhaust either.

It is late. Our only tallow candle is burnt down, and the moon does not give sufficient light. To-morrow morning we start at five o'clock. Good night! good night!

Baden: September 14, 1827.

I live here somewhat after the fashion of the late Tantalus: a mass of ideas are in my head which I long to play to myself; besides, there is in the conversation-house a very decent grand piano. I slide into the music-room, but it is occupied by a Frenchman and his wife, a fair girl, who, alas for me, is musical. Hoping that these people will take leave after having satisfied their desire, I beg the lady to play to me. I said I was a great lover of music, and had overheard her already playing beautifully, which she fully believed, and hammered away at three rondos and a dozen variations. Again and again I called out, 'Brava, comme un ange!' (fortunately she was pretty and graceful), but at last it got too much, and I tried to go. Impossible! they made me play and play. Then Amédée Perier and a few more Frenchmen came in, and I had to treat them to all and everything I could best remember. It made me think of Paris.

When I had left the French set, and went into the garden, I met Haizinger and his wife (Mme. Neumann), and we renewed our acquaintance. As they were going to leave Baden very soon, they begged me to make a little music with them; we were joined by the Roberts, and went all back to the conversation-room together. It was not lighted up, for the season is already over; but never mind, I opened the piano, and after the first few notes there were thirty or forty people there in the room, French, English, Strasburgers, cosmopolitans (Constant and his wife), applauding very liberally in the darkness. I had to play twice, and Mme. Haizinger sang two airs, and so we had quite a concert. I was introduced to a great many people whose faces I did not see, and received invitations, one for a dinner at Strasburg—don't know the people by sight! Robert took my arm and talked about the opera. Suddenly Charpentier, author of Boieldieu's 'Chaperon rouge' and several of Hérold's opera-librettos, rushes upon me: 'Mon cher ami! vous êtes musicien, je suis poëte . . . il faut que nous nous fassions applaudir à Paris!' And then he offered to give me one, already half finished, called 'Alfred le Grand,' a comic opera, 'il y a du tapage et du pastorale,' and I was just the man for him, and we must fly to the clouds together. 'Oh, que ça sera beau!' I wish you had seen the face of Robert all the time! How he looked at that man! and when he went away murmured after him something about 'Le fol!' It was splendid. And now for a good joke. The *entrepreneur* of the gambling-bank was furious against me. He charged me with having by my playing enticed many people away from the roulette, and that was against his contract. And really the man succeeded in removing the piano yesterday. But the Roberts and Haizingers conspired together and gave last night a very nice party in another room, where there was another piano. First Robert read a new comedy with Mme. Haizinger, who really read excellently, and received much applause. Afterwards we made music. Haizinger yodled *à l'Autrichienne;* Mlle. de W. piped in Italian; Mme. Neumann sang with her husband fifty verses of 'Fidelio' (how do you feel, mother?); I drummed some *études* of Moscheles, which are much liked at Baden, then also extem-

porised, and the people were contented aud happy. Some old ladies shed tears of melancholy, and Heydemann comforted and touched them in turns, saying much of the tears of melancholy and melancholy of tears. Magnus preferred talking to the young ladies, and I listened to the wise words which Benjamin Constant—kept to himself; for he did not speak the whole evening. Thus everybody had his own pleasure. But the greatest amusement came after the party, when the Haizingers and Roberts went with us students, or rather boys, to the Golden Sun, our inn, and there had a little warm supper and a good deal to drink. One good thing followed another. Mme. Neumann mimicked the whole Karlsruhe theatre, down to the prompter; the Berlin stage was not spared either, and a dialogue between Seidel and Esperstadt was especially amusing. We carried on our jovial entertainment till twelve o'clock, and I had repeatedly to promise Haizinger to call on him when I pass through Karlsruhe. To-day Robert himself will read his opera to me, and I am by all means to listen to Charpentier's second act. All this is the consequence of a few passages on an old piano!

Heidelberg: September 20, 1827.

'O Heidelberg, beautiful town, where it rains the whole day,' is the snobbish saying; but what does a student, a jolly fellow like me, care about the rain? There are grapes left, instrument-makers, journals, inns, Thibauts—no, that is saying too much, there is but *one* Thibaut, but he is worth six. What a man!

I indulge in a truly wicked gladness, that I have not made his acquaintance, out of obedience to your letter, dear mother, received to-day, but had passed a few hours with him yesterday already, twenty-four hours *before* the receipt of your letter. It is strange: the man does not know much about music, even his historical knowledge of it is limited, he generally judges only from instinct, I understand more of it than he does, and yet I have learned a great deal from him and owe him many thanks. For he has revealed to me the merits of old Italian music, and warmed me with his enthusiasm for it. There is a glow or

inspiration in his words—his I do call a flowery language! I have just taken leave of him, and as I had told him much about Sebastian Bach and said that he did not yet know the fountain-head and the most important things in music, because all that was comprised in Sebastian, he said, when I left him, 'Farewell, and we will build our friendship on Luis de Vittoria and Sebastian Bach, like two lovers who promise each other to look at the moon, and then fancy they are near each other.'

But I must tell you how I came to pay him a visit yesterday afternoon, when the weather was very bad and we all three felt very dull. It occurred to me that Thibaut in his book had mentioned a composition of 'Tu es Petrus,' and as I am now composing that very text, I plucked up my spirits and my good coat and walked straight to the Kaltethal and into his house. He could not give me the piece in question, but had other, better ones, and showed me at once his large musical library, music of all nations and all periods, played and sang to me, explained the pieces, and several hours passed thus, till a visitor came and I took my leave, not without being asked to come again to-morrow morning. What I like best was that he never inquired after my name: I loved music, that was sufficient for him, and, as I passed for a student, they had ushered me into his study without first sending in my name. This morning again we had spent two hours together before he thought of asking my name, and, kind as he had all the while been, he was now even more so. We made music together and became very communicative, and he lent me a magnificent piece of Lotti's to copy. I promised to bring it back to him this evening; but whilst immediately after dinner I was profiting of some tolerable weather for a walk to the Riesensteine, he *himself*, *Thibaut*, *manu propria*, came to the hotel to return my visit, so unfortunately I missed him. But then I found him at home afterwards, and so, excepting eating, writing, and walking time, I have spent pretty much my whole day with him. To-morrow, I am sorry to say, he must go to Karlsruhe for some business.

When I had left him yesterday at half past six, I amused myself by going to the instrument-maker's and here and there

improvising on his piano. When I was taking my leave, the man, seizing his hat and stick, protested that I must see better specimens of his manufacture, and that Herr Schröder had an excellent grand piano of his. All right, we are off, through the rain, to Herr Schröder's, a student. We arrived; the instrument-maker introduces me without knowing my name; no matter; he himself runs off, home to his work, after having particularly enjoined me to come back to him. Now I am alone with the student on his sofa. He begs me to make myself comfortable, offers me a pipe whilst extemporising, and orders an immense dog, for growling at my music, under the sofa. 'Hanne, a bottle of Hochheimer! We must drink a little together, friend!' And so we did. And with it I played to my heart's desire, until I had enough of it and was tired. Now to-day the student will be our guest at dinner, and this evening again we are invited at the student's. After this, who will deny that I have a vein for merry-making?

Cologne: October 2, 1827.

Pardon, my dear parents, that to-day again you receive a letter instead of myself. It is not the first time indeed that I count upon your indulgence, and I must hope that my present fault may be no more unpardonable than so many others. I shall stay away for a few days longer, but then to compensate for the delay I shall see all the beautiful things and gather all the useful and agreeable experience I could but dream of. In your last letter, dear mother, you say that 'when travelling one ought to see all that is worth seeing,' and you, dear father, write 'that I should make the best use of my senses and my good luck.'

I have made use of my senses, to find everything here delightful and charming, and will make use of my good luck to enjoy all the good gifts it offers me.

Magnus received word that he must be in Berlin on the 6th inst.; Heydemann decided to go with him; and although I had promised Schelble to come again to Frankfort and be present at the performance of an oratorio of Händel's unknown to me, in the Cäcilien-Verein, I had made up my mind to travel with them; the weather, moreover, being so bad that at Horchheim I could

hardly leave the house. Last night I was about to start, when of a sudden the clouds left the hills, the mist fell, the moon rose, and the news arrived that on the right bank of the Rhine, down the whole way from Horchheim to Ehrenbreitstein, the vintage would begin. And now Uncle Joseph interfered. He gave me a glowing description of all the beauties and pleasures of a vintage, and said that two days after it was over he himself is bound for Frankfort, where he intends to spend the very day of the Cäcilien-Verein. Would I stay and cheer him and aunty and then go with him, he would himself take me back to Berlin. On my alleging that I had to finish my piano-score, he brought me the most beautiful music-paper, and showed me what a good and quiet place Horchheim is for work. Well, my resistance was at an end. Now I shall finish at Horchheim this tedious work, and be rid of it when I come home; I shall hear the concert of the Cäcilien-Verein, for which Schelble, in my honour, circulates special invitations; I shall partake of the vintage. Why, you must pardon me, it is all too beautiful!

In October Felix returned to Berlin with fresh courage for work: his disappointment about the bad success of his opera was gone.

The autumn of 1827 dealt a very sensible blow to the beautiful young circle of friends: Klingemann, through wit and humour its most animating element, went to London. Soon, however, a lively correspondence was brought about, which even in later years never ceased entirely. Some parts of the first letters may find their place here, and we shall have recourse to this correspondence occasionally in the further course of our narrative, as it affords the only materials for the description of some periods, and as Fanny did not correspond so extensively with anybody else not belonging to the family.

The first letter from Klingemann to the Mendelssohn family is dated—

London: December 7, 1827.

Most honoured Herr Stadtrath, and most honoured Frau Stadträthin, incomparable young ladies, worthy squires Felix

and Paul,—Up to this time the undersigned has walked about the West End, the City, Westminster, and Southwark, and the counties of Middlesex and Surrey, etc., with a heavy load of the most condemnable ingratitude; but inasmuch as hatred belongs to love, so self-reproaches and castigations form a part of virtue, and I am virtuous! But it is difficult not to trespass, when under the influence of the thick air the body commands the intellect; when one is obliged to take large quantities of classical mutton, half-cooked vegetables, praiseworthy apple pie, and heavy port wine as a counter weight to the ponderous air; when, again, valiantly walking the immense distances of the city, one must swallow the heavy air in behalf of the heavy fare, and then sleep an endless time to be able to walk again, and by means of the walking be able to eat again, and so on. Besides all this, I have an office to wait upon, and it does not wait for me. And in this chaos of material reality are floating about the slight remains of my beloved and ever-to-be-praised past life in Berlin, and Lower Saxony overwhelming me with melancholy confusion. In Hyde Park I dropped many a sigh, over which many a well-fed John Bull may have stumbled.

'How do you like England?' is the question with which every miss or mistress to whom I get introduced assails me, and being by this time prepared for it I invariably parry the thrust by boldly answering, 'Exceedingly well!' And that is perfect truth, for everything here is so attractively different from what we foreigners are accustomed (mixed at the same time with such unexpected politeness to a stranger) that I believe it may sufficiently occupy one's intent for years. There is character, novelty, and copiousness. It is true that my front teeth have already considerably suffered from the pronunciation of the *th*, and I have not yet quite accustomed my polite German back to allow the neck to make the fashionable bow without its aid. As to my English, I am working at it like one who learns swimming at the rope, one—two—three, far from ever a pun or joke, glad enough when I find the most common expression for the most common subject, whereas, to quote the far-travelled Schelvnufskey, 'I swim about easily in the dear old mother tongue.' Now for 'comfort.' This English comfort is the

laziest fellow I ever met with. He gets up at ten o'clock, then he enters his cosy little room, about half as lofty as the one in the Berlin embassy, but nicely furnished; a cheerful coal fire is blazing in the chimney, the water is boiling, the breakfast table ready, and everything upon it placed in proper symmetry—but with a special relish the eye rests upon an immeasurable newspaper, with leading articles, news, law-suits, police reports, and various scandal. Everything is public, with full name, personal, often dramatic, local, and in the spirit of the moment. I sometimes fancy that I am reading a play of Aristophanes. The coals crackle, the coffee steams, between each sip from my cup I enjoy some interesting elopement of some romantic young miss or a daring burglary (by-the-by, stealing is carried on here at a fearful rate), or a dreadful accident of horses having broken away and postchaises being upset. In short, the climax of my existence has remained the same, and he who as a youth of twenty-seven day by day drank his coffee under large trees and watching the innocent phenomena of nature, as caterpillars and ants, could not change at twenty-nine. The Turks are menacing, the Spaniards are hanging, the French are making opposition, the stocks are falling, the ladies' waists are rising—what dismal signs of the times to come! Gigots[1] indeed are very much the fashion here too, but that does not say much. Some day or other I shall write to my friend Felix about the Corn Bill and about the culture of whiskers. There are enormous specimens here.

Our Hanoverian colony is not amiss. We 'do' Spohr, myself drumming the bass in the overture at four hands with a young lady, then all of us encircling the piano in a row like organ pipes and singing—

> Cold and stiff and yet majestic,
> On the shutter there he lies.

For so we have translated

> Kalt und starr, doch majestätisch,
> Liegt der Rajah auf der Bahre.

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[1] A lady's fashion of the period.

Our beautiful 'Dahin, dahin' we have as felicitously translated by 'Thither, thither!'

We also play trios by Hummel and Beethoven, but I do not play the violin; then some of Beethoven's symphonies at four hands, and whist at eight hands. The *lingua franca* used by some of our countrymen who have been here for a length of time already is not bad at all. When, shortly after my arrival, I was a little hoarse, they asked me, 'Haben Sie auch schon einen Kalten gefangen?' I translated it into English, 'Have you caught a cold already?' and then I understood it.

I only wish I were less near-sighted, especially for the sake of the English ladies. They do not know how to bake a pancake, and are mostly occupied with useless things, but they look desperately pretty. A peripatetic girls' school, dozens of which you see daily in Regent's Park, where they come for fresh air, appears to me like as many pathetic Peris, one more beautiful than the other, marching two and two, the grown-up ones together and conscious enough of their victorious gifts; the severe ayah in the rear looking daggers at every male person. My idea of English ladies formed long ago at Paris was quite erroneous. They had then been so long cut off from all the rest of the world that they had certainly become too peculiar; but now they have turned into citizens of the world, and at the same time absolute Graces. Even the housemaid at the Goltermanns' looks like a princess or a Hebe. By the way, they are ridiculously learned. The other day at the Moscheles' one of them asked me whether I had read Kant, which question I could not well answer in the affirmative; and when she assured me that she had, I could offer her nothing in reply but the well-known story about Kant and the student's button. On the other hand, she was much astonished when I told her that I had read all Walter Scott.

You would not believe how patriotic and German one gets here. The sea that separates us from the Continent gives a stirring importance to any news coming from beyond it, and sheds a magic light, such as England with all its riches cannot attain, on all we left behind. Berlin appears to me a perfect Eldorado, and a Sunday at the Mendelssohns' like a chapter

from a fairy tale: all irony changes into sentiment, and our love for the home customs is so strong that we have promised to meet this evening and play 'Besten Bauern,' and, if the Goltermanns have understood my hint, are likely to have German potato salad for supper. I am afraid I am found fault with for quoting Berlin too often; even the fire-alarm at night I have felt called upon to defend, on the ground of one's being fully conscious how sweet sleep is only when dropping off again after a disturbance.

I am meditating some articles for the *Musikalische Zeitung*. I have seen 'Oberon,' the 'Freischütz,' and am going to the 'Seraglio,' and then intend to *see* some English operas. May heaven bless this undertaking! The manufacturing of such an opera is brought about literally in the following manner. Somebody writes the piece, in 1790 or thereabouts, and some Mr. Storace sets it to music; the elements of his music are decidedly fabulous and prehistorical. Now the opera is looked up again, remodelled by a new poet, and Mr. Cooke writes a new overture for it; another somebody, whose name does not occur to me, writes airs for it, except those Braham is to sing, which he manufactures for himself; the *prima donna*, Mme. Féron, of chromatic memory, brings her part from Italy, written by Mercadante or some other Italian, and then a Neapolitan song with variations is added. The rest is the original music by Storace. This piece(meal) was formerly called 'The Pirate,' and is now the fashion under the name of 'Isidore de Merida; or, The Devil's Creek.'

Dr. H. has some relations at Deptford, a family B. who have a factory in that suburb, and he has introduced me there as—'a singer'! My impudence can only be excused in a strange country. They instantly offered me the part of Don Juan, and I accepted and sang it!! Deptford is more than a good German mile from my West End, and in Germany it would be considered rather adventurous to go there to tea; but here one takes a seat on one of the admirable stage-coaches, and is there in half an hour. I never see these stages without pleasure. The big carriage, on which the passengers cling like wasps on a sweet pear, rolls so swiftly and merrily along that my heart rejoices

at the thought of next spring, when the stage, with its team of four strong horses, is to convey me 80 miles a day along the smooth roads and across the green, hilly country, full of towns, villages, and cottages, to Scotland. Even near London the country is pretty: country-houses and meadows on all sides, soft hills, now and then a glimpse of the Thames, parks, fields; and the green is still beautiful, although snow and ice have come rather early this year.

But London is too large: I told them so at once. They do not, however, listen to me, and go on building at quite a ridiculous rate. The houses will at last be obliged to hire the people, instead of the reverse: there's no end to be seen of it, and the monster may yet swallow many a village before it is satisfied. His majesty our most gracious king is also building a good deal, and follows the same theory, according to which the court-tailor has to make the royal coats, *i.e.* the new coat is put on quite a similar figure, and the tailor has then to cut out plait after plait and sew it together again. The new palace is being built in the same way; any cupola or balcony that does not give satisfaction is pulled down again, and something else put up instead. But I know nothing more grand than the plan Regent Street and Regent's Park are laid out upon. Perhaps it surpasses even the Linden. But the City is the best of all, and to struggle on through the quantity of carriages, coal-heavers, rogues, and honest people to where, in the neighbourhood of the Bank, Birch's famous mock-turtle soup is to be had, affords real pleasure. The impression made by this enormous bustle and turmoil may be called demoniac; but there is an order withal, the laws of which are hardly known. But if on Sunday you pass those same streets in which on week days you cannot hear your own voice, you are almost frightened at the silence. However melancholy English Sundays are represented on the Continent, the contrast is greater than one has an idea of. Dulness alone must fill the churches; the town is overhung by indescribable thick yellow fog, which even penetrates into the rooms; all shops are closed, no newspapers appear, a miserable bell plaintively calls together the pious congregation; the English families enjoy themselves

early and late without the help of strangers, quite by themselves, they have even special books for Sundays, and nobody would think of the theatre. I am not personally concerned in all this, as we young Germans have a regular Sunday-invitation in the family of one of our countrymen, but sometimes involuntarily a sensation of the universal dulness comes over one, and then one confesses oneself 'low-spirited.' Our having a theatre on Sunday in Germany is what they can least comprehend, and it appears to them downright sinful. All my arguments about this subject with a 'miss' were of no avail. I asked her whether her toilet gave her less pleasure on a Sunday, whether she had less appetite for her dinner and tea on a Sunday—the theatre was sinful. In one respect we Germans are especially favoured here—we are all supposed to be born with a flute or a piano attached to us, every German is a person full of music. It is quite touching to see how fond the good people are of music, and what a stomach they have for listening! Like ostriches, they swallow pebbles or sweetmeats as it happens. And everything is so long here! I believe Beethoven must have been an Englishman. The oysters, however, are elegantly small. What would big F. say if he had only to look across the street from my window to see them delicately swimming in a little wooden tub! not that clumsy, fleshy Holstein substance—no, slender and sentimental, and glancing at you out of the water with a kind of melancholy longing. And then their strong, brown, manly companion, porter, stoutly foaming in those peculiar glossy tin tankards. Big F. would blush for pleasure!

But I got pale on the sea! A few Sundays ago I renewed acquaintance with a lively little lady whom I had met on the steamer in coming over. 'You looked very miserable,' she said, laughing; 'you are quite changed now.' Indeed my countenance must have been rather pale and vacant, whilst I was staring at the gray sea and the broad moonlight on it, which seemed to me like an infinite sigh. But I was not seasick, and in spite of my total apathy had sufficient clearness of mind left for dreaming. So I continued on deck, with biscuits and grog for my food. A few experienced travellers were playing at cards for champagne, and in course of time

had the impudence to offer me a glass. I could have knocked it out of their hands. And yet a remembrance of my own past joys still lingered in me, and with true envy did I watch the fat Norwegian consul sipping his excellent coffee on deck. One lady after the other disappeared, except my before-mentioned merry companion, who always remained on deck, with bright eyes, reading aloud, playing chess, etc. After all, they were only bad episodes. On the whole we had it very quiet, smooth, and serene, warm sunshine and gentle wind, no storm and no waves. That great severer, the sea, is like an immense dash—beginning at the Elbe. On that bright morning of September 1, in the harbour of Hamburg, when a boat had conveyed the solitary passenger and his goods and chattels to the steamer, and all the noise of the ship, of the coming and going, and leave-taking and cheering people, was over, the great dash commenced and cut off a beautiful sentence, while the steam-engine growled out a bass-accompaniment to the song, 'Three oarsmen were riding far out of the gate—farewell!'

But I should like to see that sentimental journey-man who is not seized with enthusiasm when the signal for setting sail is given, and who does not forget the steam from his mother's coffee-pot when the steam rises from the funnel of the ship. The evening was splendid, we came into open sea, the vessel heaved, the expected moonlight appeared, and the sky was full of trumpets and drums. Although the little lady laughed at my giddy gait, I had much self-possession left. By-and-by my whole past life was swallowed up by the sea, and I went to sleep in my cupboard. The next day was that of perfect apathy, but on the third morning the shore of Essex lay before us, with white castles, gray spires, and brown villages. We soon came into smooth water, all sufferings were over, once more a solid sensation of well-being returned, and I could look cheerfully about me. At the mouth of the Thames hundreds of ships were dancing a grand cotillon, the order of which I understood no better than does an old-fashioned mother the real cotillon in which she sees her daughter driven about in all directions.

We now made our triumphal entry, or rather merry England triumphed over us—the ship's cotillon now became an

Ecossaise on the Thames. In long rows they went up and down, steamers playing the part of merry fellows, and glided cheerfully by, filled with passengers and music. The villages, country-houses, and towns on the banks looked on smilingly, until they grew more and more like stately matrons, and more and more compact, and finally turned into the metropolis herself—ships, ships, and ships again, numberless masts, like so many bean-sticks at Farmer Baumann's at the Meierei. About three o'clock we landed at the old Tower, and after some delay, for the examination of my passport and luggage, a cab drove me speedily through a part of London I had not passed in the ship, and in the evening I found myself safely at the Goltermanns', who had offered me the hospitality of their house; no longer envying the Norwegian consul his coffee, and listening comfortably to a discussion about trade and the new cabinet in the very best English.

I cannot complain of the expense of living in London. As a bachelor I live comfortably on my 300*l.* a year. But it is different with families: the necessary establishment and servants require as much again. Consequently I am condemned to eternal youth: in spite of all the Berlin prophecies, my single blessedness will not soon become a double one—I shall win the bets. For the present, the new surroundings have brought back many of my youthful habits and delights. Thus the theatre here finds me quite a new man, and I especially enjoy English comedies. I am not yet able to decide whether the actors are really as original and natural as they appear to me, or whether much of the pleasure is not owing to newness and strangeness. I could make a long list already of the actors who appear to me excellent. The public also seems to me to evince more sympathy than at home; in a kind of critical innocence it is easily moved to applause by vigorously spoken passages, and laughs heartily at the jokes. But at the entrance of the theatre, before the doors are opened, policemen call out, 'Gentlemen, take care of your pockets in going in; take care of pickpockets, gentlemen!' And everybody makes sure of his property. A London paper, the *Herald*, states that there are between 80,000 and 100,000 thieves of both sexes in the town.

December 11.—Rome was not built in a day, and my letter was not finished for the last mail either: the rough hand of duty interfered. Yesterday, on the 10th,[1] in thought I sent my best wishes to you, dear Mr. Mendelssohn. I tried to guess whether all the merry young folks danced, piped, acted, or whatever else they performed in honour of the day. I hope soon to hear about it. I am longing for news from Berlin: everything interests me, down to the pavement in the streets and the Wednesday literary society. If you, dearest Mr. Mendelssohn, should not feel inclined to write, pray give strict orders to one of your promising children—for instance, to the eldest son—to let me have as minute an account as possible, in the proper chronicle style.

Fanny to Klingemann.

Berlin: December 23, 1827.

Remember the date of your letter, calculate the time of its journey, and you will find that on the very day after I got it I have interrupted my important Christmas preparations, and am sitting at my desk to write at least the beginning of an answer. Each of us considers your delightful letter as his or her especial property, and, as we are all going to write, you will have to pardon us if we now and then come into collision. But it was not otherwise when we had you here, and must often have treated you with the same story twice: why not now twenty or forty times? In this respect the one whose letter you read first has a decided privilege; the others are necessarily more or less like parrots.

The longer you kept us waiting for your letter, the more we enjoyed it when at last it arrived (but do not take this as a rule for the future; henceforward it will be the reverse!), and it stood in danger of being literally torn to pieces between us, had not father and mother been generous enough to allow us the first reading.

December 25.—The Christmas-candles are burnt down, the beautiful presents stowed away, and we spend our Christmas

[1] Klingemann mistook the date. Abraham Mendelssohn's birthday was on December 11.

day quietly at home. Mother is asleep in one corner of the sofa, Paul in the other, Rebecca absorbed in the Fashions, and I am going to continue my letter. On days like yesterday we miss you more than generally; and as 'generally' we speak of you every half-hour, you may draw the conclusion. Our Christmas-eve, however, was very merry and pleasant. Felix had written for Rebecca a children's symphony with the instruments of the Haydn one, which we performed. It is most amusing. For me he has written a piece of a different kind, a four-part chorus with small orchestra accompaniment on the chorale, 'Christe, du Lamm Gottes.' I have played it several times to-day; it is most beautiful. Altogether he has devoted himself much to church music of late. On my birthday he gave me a piece for chorus and orchestra, in nineteen parts, on the words, 'Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram ædificabo ecclesiam meam.' I believe it to be a very remarkable work, but only to be fully appreciated when performed in a great church and under proper conditions. It is great fun that D., from one thing or another Felix said about this matter, began to fear that he might have turned Roman Catholic, and expressed his anxiety to S., who again confided it to another friend, so that we were already in dread of its becoming town talk, which happily it has not.

If you were here you would find plenty of scope for your wit and fun in the taste for learning the public exhibits this year. Of Alexander von Humboldt's lecture on physical geography at the university you must have heard. But do you know that at his majesty's desire he has begun a second course of lectures in the hall of the Singakademie, attended by everybody who lays any claim to good breeding and fashion, from the king and the whole court, ministers, generals, officers, artists, authors, *beaux esprits* (and ugly ones, too), students, and ladies, down to your unworthy correspondent? The crowd is fearful, the public imposing, and the lectures are very interesting indeed. Gentlemen may laugh as much as they like, but it is delightful that we too have the opportunity given us of listening to clever men. We fully enjoy this happiness, and must try to bear the scoffing. And now I will give up completely to your

mockery, by confessing that we are hearing another course of lectures, from a foreigner, about experimental physics. These lectures are likewise attended by ladies chiefly. Holtei's lectures have attracted an uncommonly large public this year. He reads in a newly built room, well lighted with gas. *A propos* of gas, just fancy that the darkness at Crelle's is changed into the brightest light (*i.e.* gas), so that now you can not only see your own self but everybody else in the room. I suppose all houses without exception are lighted with gas in England? Here it is getting more and more generally introduced, the same as the *trottoirs*, in which you take such a kind interest. In the autumn, Holtei, who had seen something of the *Gartenzeitung*, founded a *Thee- und Schneezeitung*, on the same system, contributions for which were to be put into a tin box, deposited in our house. For a time it went on well, as Frank and Eichborn wrote very amusing articles, but very soon submitted to the fate of all human things. The introduction was a poem to you, as one who, though absent, lived amongst us. On my birthday we had a very pretty dance, with very pretty girls. You ought to have been here. Cannot you make them send you over here for a few days as a courier, just to have a kaleidoscopic look at our doings, and then wrap yourself up again in your English fog? Our Sundays are no longer so fairy-like: the true spirit of fun and pleasure is gone, and you know best who carried it away! It is a pity!

I like your performance of Don Juan. Was it in German or in Italian? It must be delicious to hear an Englishman sing Italian. At the Königstadt theatre here they have now an Italian singer of rare merit, Costanza Tibaldi. She unites all you have ever read in novels and romances of southern fire, burning power of the eyes, Juno-figure, irresistible charm of language and accent. She generally appears in men's parts, and never did I see a more beautiful youth; but female attire is likewise becoming to her, and I must add that I have seen few more beautiful women. Her voice is a deep alto, without especial charm, but every sound from her mouth inspires one with enthusiasm. Fancy *me* hearing a duet of Rossini's *twice* with pleasure! I suppose the news has not yet penetrated as

far as England that Nägeli is preparing a new edition of Bach's great five-part mass in B minor? It is a triumph for the Berlin enthusiasts, Marx above all. The man really deserves well of the undertaking, from which (as he knows) he will have no pecuniary advantage.

Klingemann to Fanny.

London: January 22, 1828.

If I do not write a long letter now, the general one which I have addressed to the whole dear family may excuse me. Here I only write to express the veneration and gratitude with which the delightful epistle of my severe but benevolent patroness has been received. No general letter can give me a dispensation from this duty, no more than the insolent thought how much gratitude a young lady must have anticipated whilst bestowing such a favour. It would have been too old-fashioned and pedantic if I had expressed my sense of obligation in poetry, and appeared to you about as original as when your partner in a cotillon at the Fränkels' (no doubt an officer) asks you if you have danced much this winter, or the equivalent phrase this season, how you like Humboldt's lectures. Now do not, for heaven's sake, believe that I mean to become satirical as regards the progress of my young lady friends in the knowledge of the chemical elements of a collar or a cake: they are deeply important and necessary things. And why should not a young lady know how and where her shawl has grown, quite as well as the professor, who is behind her in the knowledge of its practical use? And another great advantage: suppose you were suddenly cast away to Mongolia, you would only have to submit some mountain or river or earth to a trifling investigation to say for certain, Here I am in Mongolia, consequently so and so many post-stages from Leipziger Strasse No. 3, and quietly order your horses. I know no better illustration of the usefulness of geography than that of the French employé who, during the time of the Empire, is sent to Gröningen, and thereupon complains with his friends and family at being obliged to go to such a cruelly cold, far-off region, because he thinks

of Grönland (Greenland) instead of the Dutch town. No; my only fear and objection lies in another quarter—I am afraid that any man, however learned and dignified, will feel a little foolish in the presence of ladies, and the subject will run away with the object. You must not be angry about it, for at the bottom of all this there is much less want of confidence in the female powers of perception than an innate desire to please you rather than teach you—'Tis my vocation, Hal.' Woe to the time when this chivalrous feeling is extinguished! One thing, however, I have to reproach you with, which is, that you follow the false principle which prevails among women, and do not carry your knowledge into life and letters—I find no comparison or metaphor from chemistry, and yet they would be so ornamental! If I did but know anything of the matter, I would make a better use of it!

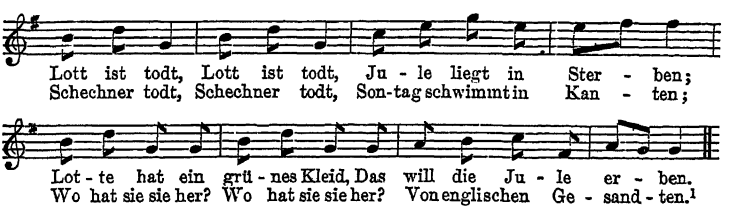
The day of our 'Messiah' performance was one of the loveliest imaginable, like a May-day for warmth, sunshine, blue air, and green grass; if the trees had also been green, it would have been the very weather for home-sickness. My companion and I were sitting on a bench near the Serpentine river in Hyde Park, enjoying the sunshine and looking at the swans and Englishwomen who glided past us by land and water so solemnly and elegantly. We never once thought of the new Cabinet, but had a good talk about home. Afterwards I went with H. to Deptford, the first time that we went there by day. Outside the stage I felt as if a sceptre had been put into my hand, such a glorious and regal view I had from my high seat, first of the crowded streets, and then, going over Westminster Bridge, of the splendid river. For five miles, indeed, the houses formed an almost uninterrupted row; but whenever we could get a glimpse beyond, it fell on lovely green meadows and the blue outlines of hills.

I do share my friend X.'s regret at the loss caused by my absence, but did not know that I was expected to write to him. He was away when I went away, and I believe that a letter from him might just as well begin, 'At my return I found you no longer here,' as one from me, 'Cruel fate carried me off before I could take my leave of you.'

Fanny to Klingemann.

Berlin: February 15, 1828.

. . . In the character of your appointed musical gazette, I can give you at least some news. The Singakademie, finding its financial affairs in rather a complicated condition, has actually condescended to sing for its own benefit. My symphony association joined in the laudable enterprise (which gave me an opportunity of hearing it myself), and the concert would have been perfect had not by chance all the solo singers been prevented from singing, and so it came to pass that Köpke sang the whole bass and tenor part *prima vista*. It was a great achievement, the audience was satisfied, and the performance has been repeated, with such success that it has been called the eighth wonder of the world. Meanwhile we danced at the Heynes', and evinced our feeling for art and music by alternate galops and waltzes. The most important novelty in music since you left is a galop-waltz with text, with which the whole town is ringing. No ball without the melody—you cannot even live two minutes without being pursued by it, just as one used to be by the Huntsman's Chorus, or last year by the talk about Sontag. I give you the manuscript:—



[1] A popular street song in Berlin:—

Lottie's dead, Lottie's dead,
Julia lies a-dying:
Lottie had a green silk dress,
For which was Julia sighing.

Which was parodied, in mockery of Schechner and Sontag, two well-known Berlin singers:—

Schechner's dead, Schechner's dead,
Sontag floats in laces.
Whence are they? whence are they?
The British Envoy's Graces!

There are innumerable other verses, some of them not fit for ladies' ears.

In 1828, on the 18th of April, for perhaps the first time in Germany, one of those universal festivals took place which at a later date, and especially from 1848 to 1866, became so frequent, and by which the Germans tried to forget their want of political union. The one in question was the Dürer centenary, and Fanny gives an account of it to Klingemann.

Berlin: April 14, 1828

This winter we have heard from Moser most of Beethoven's symphonies, however imperfectly. It is a step forward, anyhow, and we do live in a time when progress in all respects, and in art also, is astounding, whether we acknowledge it or not. The Passion-music will without fail be published this year by Schlesinger. Schelble at Frankfort has performed part of the mass with applause. The movement is general, the same wind is rustling in all the branches, there is no shutting one's ears to it. The old antiquated phœnix is only waiting for his funeral pile, and will not be long finding it, for the time is at hand, and we shall live to see great things. I do not know why I am so historically disposed to-day, and have a mind to measure everything by centuries and nations. It is because Spontini is going, on the Fast-day, to perform the *first* part of Beethoven's and the *second* of Bach's mass; showing thereby that the greatest talents make the most narrow-minded mistakes, and that nevertheless the world marches on with seven-leagued boots and scorns everything little. Is that my comfort? No, my comfort is that Felix will remain another year at Berlin, that he is pretty sure now not to have to serve his year in the army, and the rest will have its course.

20*th April.*—I could never have believed that we should have to thank the Dürer festival for so happy a day and such charming recollections. Felix in six weeks has written a grand cantata for chorus and full orchestra, with airs, recitatives, and all sorts of things. You may fancy that such hasty

work has no especial value for him: at first he was so angry about it that he talked of burning the whole thing as soon as the performance was over. But as the rehearsals and the choruses were admirably executed by the academy, he was reconciled, and the beautiful decoration of the room and liberality of arrangements made his pleasure complete. When on Thursday evening at the last rehearsal things went rather unsatisfactorily, Felix remained very cool, and assured everybody that all would come off splendidly. And splendidly it did come off! On Friday the 18th of April, the 300th anniversary of Dürer's death, the most exquisite spring day, the whole academy of arts, with their senate, and all the students of the academy of architecture, proceeded to the hall of the Singakademie, which was decorated in the following way: the background of the orchestra was formed by a partition wall, painted in red and gold, in the centre of which stood Dürer's colossal statue between two smaller female figures, representing different branches of his art. Above this was a painting by Dahling after a woodcut of Dürer's in the form of Raphael's Loggie, with large green draperies on both sides. The effect was quite striking, and very beautiful. The orchestra, consisting of the best performers of both orchestras, and some amateurs, was conducted by Felix and Rietz, whilst Zelter at the piano conducted the choir. The ladies (contrary to their custom) were very elegantly and beautifully dressed, and looked very nice, and the orchestra was quite a splendid sight. The public, too, looked extremely festive, and I never remember more perfect silence in such a large assembly. The festival began with Felix's Trumpet-overture in C major. Then followed a speech by T., which lasted three quarters of an hour—an age! Hardly ever have I seen an audience more joyfully moved than when he spoke of Dürer's approaching death—a general murmur of applause was heard; and when at last it was really over, all started from their seats in frantic joy. Then followed the cantata, which lasted upwards of an hour and a quarter. The soli were sung by Mmes. Milder and Türrschmiedt, Stümer and Devrient. Everything went off so successfully, and the reception was so genial, that I do not remember ever passing more agreeable hours. The

solemnity was finished by three o'clock, and at four a dinner of about two hundred persons began, mostly artists, learned men, and high-place government officials: we went as guests of Schadow, who presided at the table. I cannot tell you how Felix was honoured and courted by people of distinction, known and unknown; but one thing I must add, that towards the end of the meal Zelter and Schadow took him by the hand, and the latter made a speech to him and solemnly proclaimed him an honorary member of the Artists' Association, of which he received the diploma. At the same time his health was proposed and enthusiastically cheered. Yesterday the whole day was taken up by visits of congratulation. But what rejoices me most is that he himself is so pleased with this day, and shows himself more susceptible than hitherto of the honours he received. I assure you he is more excellent and more amiable from day to day.; and this is not sisterly affection, but an impartial judgment. I beg you, however, to tell nobody, known or unknown to me, anything of this; for nobody, not even you, will think me impartial, and Felix would be angry if he knew that I have written so much about him.

In conclusion, I must tell you that we miss you and long for you very much. Ah, Mr. Klingemann, who is there now to criticise our embroideries, our new dresses, or our bonnets? Who drops in *en passant* for half an hour's chat? Who understands nonsense, and knows how other honest people feel? All these inestimable qualities, as well as the praiseworthy dexterity with which you handle the German language, must now perish in London.

The same to the same.

June 18, 1828.

A gentle rain coming down from the soft warm atmosphere, the green lawn bordered in by a thick row of magnificent roses, a gigantic strawberry which Paul is just putting into my mouth, spring inside and outside, bright spirits, loving thoughts of the absent—such are the outlines and features of our 'to-day.' And so you have had a walking tour, dear Klingemann? I assure you I am not laughing at it, but am truly glad that

you could leave the coal region of London behind you for a little time, and breathe the fresh air and the smell of the lilacs. Ours were beautiful, and lilies of the valley and violets we have had in quantities: now the red children of summer, roses and strawberries, have succeeded them, and fill the atmosphere with their fragrant perfume. Oh, summer is beautiful!

Our Whitsuntide holidays were spent in the following manner: Paul with seven school friends and a teacher had arranged a walking tour to Neustadt-Eberswalde, for the purpose of seeing the iron, copper, and brass factories and foundries; but the magistrate (in this case represented by father), who did not know the teacher and wanted the control to be controlled (don't you recognise your Prussians there?), appointed Felix to this important and secret post. Felix, like a dutiful son, expressed at once an ardent desire to keep the technological young folks company; but not a bit inclined to pass a dull time, he summoned three friends to secretly follow him and accidentally meet him down there. Arend and Droysen actually hire a carriage and persuade little David to be of the party! As late as eleven o'clock in the evening David runs with Droysen to Blume and Stegmayer, to obtain his leave; the money—at a low ebb so near the end of the month—is got on credit, and the party arrive at Neustadt shortly after the pedestrians. Now there is no end of fun, swimming, driving, walking, riding, sight-seeing. David extemporised on his violin for the benefit of all the foundries, and a bill of sixteen thalers is run up for *Bierkaltschale* [a summer drink]—a fact which I cannot comprehend to this day.

During this time father was ill of ague, a pretty general complaint here at present, but only slightly and for a very short time, and when the young men came home, fatigued after their eight days' pleasure, he was well again. I know you will be interested to hear that the Fräuleins M. were here. Late in the evening we walked in the garden, and with 1826 sighs thought of the year 1826 (a group of youths followed us at a little distance). Suddenly, as if under the charm of sacred recollections, we all rushed to the 'editor's place,' formed a ring round the editor's poplar (we could only just do it), and solemnly called

out three times, 'Klingemann! Klingemann!! Klingemann!!!' It was beautiful—I am sure you would have been pleased.

You ask why we never mentioned Börne's stay in Berlin? Because in all the wide, wide world nothing is to be said of him. At times we thought that some nobody had equipped himself with this nice name for travelling about. This is not an opinion formed on just seeing him once—he stayed a long time, and we have met him alone, in company, at noon, at night, and upon all sorts of occasions—he has always been the same little man, hard of hearing and still harder of comprehending, to whom the simplest things were new and strange, who, like all the common people at Frankfort, wondered to see the Berliners walk on their hind-legs and eat with their fore-legs, wondered that the trees here were really green and the snow really white.

One day he produced a book and made me say the number 10,430, after which, when in anxious silence I expected some problem, he declared the examination finished, and intimated his surprise at my being able to pronounce a number of five figures. We have never heard from him a word deserving notice, never seen a spark or a glimpse of genius.

Remarkable things have happened in Germany. The second part of 'Faust,' a direct continuation of the first, has appeared. Having only read it once and quickly, I cannot say anything about it, but that its tone and spirit is much more like the first than 'Helena,' which perhaps you have not yet read either. Unfortunately the things are not to be had separately, and the subscribers to the large edition have only now received the first number, whilst of the small edition three numbers have already appeared. The new 'Faust' is also a fragment, and concludes with the words 'to be continued.' I am convinced he will continue 'Faust' as long as he lives; and he will live long—of that I am also convinced. He is destined perfectly to fulfil the lot of man in every respect, and, as he did not die before his 'Werther,' he will reach the highest possible age. But now listen to a piece of news that made me laugh as long as I did not believe it: Holtey has prepared Goethe's 'Faust' for the Königstadt theatre: with Rösicke as Mephistopheles.

But it is a fact! When you have recovered from your

astonishment I will go on. Goethe, in the truly regal spirit and wise mildness and superiority of his age, has himself given his consent. I maintain that when Holtey made his proposal he muttered in his habitual kind way, 'Well, well!' whereupon Holtey grasped his hand with enthusiasm and cried out, 'I understand you, and thank you;' and, lo and behold, the old king was too proud to clear up the intentional mistake, for he thought, 'Do with me as you like, you can neither pull me down nor lift me up: why not then take me to the Königstadt theatre?' Oh, irony of fate! In our house, where as you know the most innocent remark on the weather calls forth violent party-struggles, all shades of opinion are to be met with, from mother, a partisan of Holtey and the Königstädter, who praises and rejoices, and father, also partial to Holtey, who mildly disapproves, down to us, who, not partial to Holtey, though not disliking him, are furious: each feels and judges differently. As soon as the crime has really been perpetrated you shall hear the particulars.

Your English musical news is quite delightful. Of all the music for four hands you wish to possess, nothing exists as yet. But who knows, perhaps I may some day find leisure and set to work arranging the overture for the Midsummer-night's Dream for you. It will be quite as nice a gift as a purse or a pocket-book. Felix is writing a great instrumental piece, 'Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt,' after Goethe's poem. It will be worthy of him. He wanted to avoid an overture with introduction, and the whole consists of two separate tableaux.

The same to the same.

September 12, 1828.

. . . *À propos* of Königstadt, it is my turn now to make fun of you, Mr. Klingemann. Goethe after all would not hear of 'Faust' on the stage, and the subject has been dropped. So for once 'youth quickly inflamed by love and by wrath' has been right.

15*th.*—Again I have a whole sackful of news to overwhelm you with. Do you remember, from the pre-Adamite time of your residence in Germany, that a number of physicians and physio-

logists used to have a meeting every year? They have chosen Berlin this time, and Humboldt is their president, Lichtenstein their secretary, and their existence the topic of the day. But this is not all. Humboldt, the cosmopolitan, the grandest, most amiable, and most learned courtier of his time, gives them a *fête* the like of which this town has never seen. It is to take place in the concert hall, seven hundred guests are invited, among them the king, six students, three pupils of the highest class of all the upper public schools, all the head-masters of those schools, all naturalists, *et le reste.* Felix has been requested to write a cantata for their reception (you see he is the fashion), and Rellstab, who luckily returned from Spandau just in time, has done the words. As the naturalists follow the rule of Mahomet and exclude women from their paradise, the choir consists only of the best male voices of the capital; and as Humboldt, whose forte music is not, has limited his composer as to the number of musicians, the orchestra is quite original; it consists only of double-basses, violoncellos, trumpets, horns, and clarinets. Yesterday they had a rehearsal, and the effect is said to be good. The only thing vexatious is that we must not be present. You cannot imagine the ridiculous mixture of country-town gossip and metropolitan grandeur which has come to light on the occasion. The whole arrangement, the reception of all the philosophising strangers, and the crown of names great in science for one purpose (though a mere social one), is undoubtedly grand. But now everybody knows, inquires, and reports how much Beyermann has to furnish for the money, what Humboldt will have to pay for the entertainment of his guests, and what the refreshments, ordered at Conradi's, will be like. We young folks get angry every time when these miserable details are mentioned.

The same to the same.

Berlin: December 8, 1828.

. . . Many thanks for the birthday-wishes you sent me: it was quite a poem. My birthday was celebrated very nicely, and I cannot deny that in the evening I was tired out, what

with all my visitors and all my talking and thanking. Felix has given me three presents, a 'song without words'[1] for my album (he has lately written several beautiful ones), another piece for the piano composed not long ago and already known to me, and a great work, a piece for four choruses, Antiphona et Responsorium, about the words 'Hora est, jam nos de somno surgere,' etc. The academy is going to sing it. I will gladly fulfil your request and give you particulars of what Felix is doing, although that is less easy than it may appear. On the whole, I feel no doubt that with every new work he makes an advance in clearness and depth. His ideas take more and more a fixed direction, and he steadily advances towards the aim he has set himself, and of which he is clearly conscious. I know not how to define this aim, perhaps because an idea in art cannot altogether be well expressed in words—otherwise poetry would be the only art—perhaps also because I can only watch his progress with loving eyes, and not on the wings of thought lead the way and foresee his aim. He has full command over all his talents, and day by day enlarges his domain, ruling like a general over all the means of development art can offer him.

December 27, 1828.

Christmas has passed before I found leisure to continue our conversation. Our needle-work, although early begun, was much more extensive than usual, and towards the end accumulated to such a degree that we had to spend all our time in getting through it. Owing to our Christmas work the festive time of preparation occupies a much longer period for us women than you can understand: in the last few weeks before Christmas we do really, like children, feel under a charm, and acknowledge no other interests and purposes than those of the needle. It is only during the holidays that I have found out that other instruments besides needles, and other strings besides silk, are in existence. But you ought to have seen our achievements! A table-cover which we made is universally admired, and I am sure you would have more than once put on your eye-glass to watch

[1] Perhaps the first appearance of this name, now so familiar. The first book (Op. 19) was not published till August 1832.

the progress of our work. Christmas-eve was most animated and pleasant. You know that in our house there must always be a sort of *jeune garde*, and the presence of my brothers and the constant flow of young life exercise an ever attractive influence, so that now too the set is complete, and nothing to be said against the generation of the day—they are most lively and amiable. Gans presides as commander and protector of the younger ones. He is a man of intellect and knowledge, and of great social talent likewise, in spite of many pieces of bearishness. We sisters are trying to teach him manners; but although he earnestly endeavours to improve, he often forgets our lessons. The other day, at a very nice dinner at the Breslau Mendelssohns', he was my neighbour, and took care of me with much politeness; but when the cherries were handed round, he first took a handful himself, and then asked, 'May I help you to some?' I declined.

As a counterpart of Gans I must mention Dirichlet, professor of mathematics, a very handsome and amiable man, as full of fun and spirits as a student, and very learned. Gans quarrels and fights with him like a schoolboy. Amongst the new-comers there is also Hensel, who returned from Italy two months ago, and is likewise a merry, animating member of our society. All this new set has somehow to suffer from you, as your name constantly hovers about them like a shadow; but, on the other hand, they are pleased at the interest we take in an absent one, and hope some day to be similarly remembered by us. Droysen, a philologist of nineteen, with all the freshness and lively active interests of his age, with a knowledge far above his age, endowed with a pure, poetic spirit and a healthy amiable mind, by which *any* age would be adorned, said to me yesterday that he had formed a complete idea of your personal appearance. I diligently inquire, and have to learn that he fancies you something like Rietz!! Only that instead of Rietz's dry gravity he imagines an expression of caustic humour on your face. I could not help laughing outright, and tried to trace a most vivid portrait of you, which I am going to relieve by a few more touches in course of time. The above and several other young people spent Christ-

mas-eve with us. Felix had written a charming children's symphony[1] on the same day, which was played twice with general applause. A large *Baumkuchen* was given to Dirichlet (he is excessively fond of it). It was dressed as a lady, and made him a declaration of love, which gave occasion for a thousand jokes.

Felix is working and scheming at a variety of composition: he is arranging Händel's cantata of 'Acis and Galatea.' In return, the academy is going to sing the 'Passion' for him and Devrient; it is to be sung in the course of the winter for some charitable purpose, the purpose in this case being the means and the means the purpose. Do you understand? At the same time the work will appear at Schlesinger's, a number of plates are already finished, and the year 1829 is likely to form an epoch in the annals of music. Felix purposes finishing a certain number of compositions before his departure, which is settled for early spring. What shall I do without him?

Wilhelm Hensel had come home from Italy in October 1828. His position with regard to Fanny was a peculiar one. They had known and loved one another as young people of twenty-eight and seventeen. Since then they had not met for five years, and impressions most various and powerful had acted on the development of their minds. Direct communication had been forbidden to them. He had passed that time in the sunny south in contemplating and endeavouring to imitate the highest perfection his art had ever attained; she had developed from a child into a young woman, in the most animated and intellectual family circle. Now they met again, the man of thirty-three and the maiden of twenty-two they were entirely changed from what they were when they parted five years before; but their love and their desire of assimilating their different natures had remained unchanged. He, in the zenith and maturity of manhood, looking back already on his best years of youth, now longed with all his energy for the possession of what he had so long desired; she, timid in the beginning, bashfully retreated

[1] Felix therefore composed *two* children's symphonies (see p. 151). Only one has been preserved. No trace of the second has been found.

from before the man who by so long an absence had grown a stranger to her, into the beloved circle of her parents, sister and brothers, and friends. The parents, fully aware of the approaching decisive moment when they would have to share their child with another, did not perhaps receive the stranger with their wonted kindness. The circle of friends, and the brother himself, with the exclusiveness peculiar to that kind of harmonious corporation, actually resisted the intruder, who was pursuing a prize which many a one of the friends may have secretly coveted for himself. And on both sides faults had to be conquered. Hensel at first was dreadfully jealous—jealous of all and everything, parents, sister, brothers, friends and acquaintance, and even of Fanny's art. He was a stranger in a circle which, as is often the case, had introduced among its members a variety of allusions and relationships both playful and serious, and in consequence a sort of coterie-slang not intelligible to the uninitiated. In such cases a stranger is intolerant, and feels himself under a constraint; many of the jokes appear to him stupid, he cannot enter into the others' train of ideas. To them again the stranger appears stiff and cold, and they button themselves up against a new unaccustomed element. Many a pointed arrow of wit is thrown at him, which the intruder cannot ward off, because he only feels the edge long after it had hit him. Fanny, on the other hand, was often capricious; she could not at once enter into his strange and grave train of thoughts, and sometimes would only joke when he was in real earnest. She had walked on the sunny heights of a life ignorant of care, whilst he had struggled hard for existence. Through his innate modesty depreciating his own value, and at the same time ignoring the firm faithfulness of Fanny's nature, he was not without a fear that during the five long years of his absence one or another of the more brilliant young friends of the family might have taken his place in Fanny's heart, and with a suspicious glance he at first scrutinised the whole circle. But this could not last long. Each of them had an earnest desire to understand the other, and thus all obstacles were soon removed. Each had it at heart to be perfectly true to the other, and wished for a lasting union; concealment and outward appear-

ance were not in their nature. Fanny's letters during the engagement—which a kind fate has preserved to her son, but which must be withheld from publicity—are of a truly pathetic, heart-moving beauty. Every morning Hensel's servant came, bringing and taking back a short note of greeting, often of serious purport: all the struggles of two conscientious natures are reflected in them as in a mirror. Only *her* letters have been preserved: with characteristic energy, she refuses to sacrifice her brother to the jealousy with which Hensel in the beginning regarded her love for him, but she consents to give up her friends and even her art. The claims of the present often disturb her; but when she is alone in the quiet of night, alone with the ideal image of her beloved, such as her mind's eye was wont to see it during the years of separation, she feels in harmony with herself, and image and reality gradually become no longer two but one. She never in her thoughts loses sight of that letter of her father's in which he calls the vocation of a housewife the only true aim and study of a young woman, and in thinking of the man of her choice she earnestly devotes herself to this aim. She strives to obtain a thorough insight into his nature, and to do this, without ever yielding where her sense of right was not convinced, she recognises as a wife's indispensable duty. It is her constant task and endeavour to shape two natures into one harmonious integrity, and to keep this in accordance with her surroundings. Throughout these letters we see her striving at the fulfilment of these precepts, this one endeavour being, as it were, the 'red thread' that runs through them all. And thus she succeeded—she obtained that he, who would exclude all the rest of the world from her possession, acknowledged the claim of other ties, and henceforward formed a cherished link of her circle, loved above all by Fanny.

Hensel in his way strove as sedulously towards their common aim. We have mentioned that none of his letters from this period have been preserved, but it may be seen that in married life he gave up quite as much of his individuality as Fanny did of hers. He fully appreciated her high and noble qualities, and left her full liberty. And here again, as during his stay in Italy, his art became the bridge by which he passed over all

obstacles and secured a place for himself in the hearts of all. He had an especially powerful agent in a portrait he painted of Felix, which was unanimously liked and appreciated, and had a double value at a moment when Felix was on the eve of saying goodbye to his parents' house. In a diary of Fanny's, complete from January 1, 1829, to her death, and which forms our chief source of information for the following period, she says : 'Hensel brought the sketch of Felix's portrait, which shows a clear and beautiful conception. Felix himself is quite charmed with it, and I fancy he is very different towards Hensel since the portrait was begun.'

Whilst by this portrait Hensel gave another proof of his abilities for serious work, he also by a little sketch showed himself a match for the witty coterie-tone prevailing in the Mendelssohn circle. This little work of art is too characteristic to be passed over. It is called 'The Wheel,' an appellation given by the initiated to the whole circle of the more intimate friends. The artist took hold of this idea, and represented the whole society as a real wheel. The nave or centre of the whole is Felix, in a Scotch costume (in allusion to his intended journey), and making music like another Arion listened to by the Dolphins. The spokes are formed by Fanny and Rebecca—embracing each other, with a sheet of music in their hands, and ending below in fish-otters (this was a nickname Felix gave them)—and a number of the friends of the family, two and two together, with all sorts of attributes and costumes, alluding to coterie-jokes. The wheel is thus firmly closed, shut up to the rest of the world, relying on and relating to itself only. But on the outside, attached to the wheel as it were like Ixion, and fettered by a chain, the end of which is in Fanny's hand, you see a stranger about to swing himself into the wheel, Hensel himself. This little symbolical description of the events of the year 1829, charmingly conceived and charmingly executed, could not fail to be successful. The wheel opened and received Wilhelm Hensel.

The lovers were engaged on January 22, 1829, and this betrothal and Felix's approaching departure were the light and dark threads out of which the tissue of the days were woven.

Immediately after the engagement the rehearsals of Sebastian Bach's 'St Matthew's Passion' began, the brilliant representation of which was Felix's musical leave-taking from Berlin. The profound masterpieces Bach and Beethoven had bequeathed to posterity were a treasure hardly known at the time. Only just then the most intelligent musical people began to comprehend that something must be done to bring this treasure to daylight, and that this was in a musical point of view the greatest task of the period. What appreciation such a task found in the Mendelssohn circle we have already seen in Fanny's letters to Klingemann. Felix has devoted to it, alongside of his own compositions, a life-long, earnest, and conscientious pursuit, and the fact that Bach and Beethoven are now known and appreciated by the German nation is in a great degree his merit. For the present the great object was the Passion-music, and relating to it Fanny gives the following account to Klingemann, in a letter to which a few short extracts from her diary are added:—

Berlin: March 22, 1829.

We are soon going to send you Felix. He has left himself a beautiful memorial here by two crowded representations of the 'Passion' for the benefit of the poor. What used to appear to us as a dream, to be realised in far-off future times, has now become real: the 'Passion' has been given to the public, and is everybody's property. Before I can tell you more about it, there are other subjects—Felix's journey and my engagement; and I really should not know in this throng of events how to begin, if I made this at all a matter of reflection. So then. Your last letter, in which, not guessing what has happened here, you give us a minute description of all the misery and ridicule of the affianced state, has amused us excessively, and I assure you that your sarcasms did not touch us in the least. You may believe my assurance, that we belong to the better class of our order, and are not a nuisance to other people. Only ask my brother and sister. Nor do I think it difficult to appear merry when one is inwardly happy, and to behave decently when one has been well brought up. I repeat it, I cannot comprehend those couples who are intolerably sentimental. I must

not forego the pleasure I have in telling you that your letters have acquired you the affection of Hensel, who formerly, like all the rest of your far-off acquaintances, did not know you. And last, not least, let me thank you for offering to become one of my female friends, and accept my assurance that our friendship will remain unchanged, as my speedy answer may show. My memory, such a bad one for learning, is faithfully retentive for all experiences in life, nor shall new ties or any decree of fate make me forget the friends and companions of my happy youth. Our correspondence, moreover, will gain a new impulse by Felix's visit to England. The prospect of his absence, as you may well imagine, casts a deep shadow on this sunny time of my life. I know that you love him for your own sake and for his, but now you must love him even more, as he has no one in England who has loved him ere this, and you will be to him Alpha and Omega. I wish he may spend many a quiet hour with you, when he may speak to you of olden times and new moments, and the melodious presentiment of a time to come. Try and get him such opportunities; or I would say, do not divert him from conversation about home, but rather let him dwell upon the subject. I know he will be often with us in his thoughts, and with that peculiar moist sparkle of his eyes. To this hour I do not know what I shall do without him, but all will be mute and desolate, I fancy, and I should be ashamed of my whole hitherto life if either engagement or marriage could ward off the sense of that bereavement. Take good care of him, and let him find one warm heart for the many he leaves behind! And now pardon me for giving way to my feelings in this manner. I know you do not feel less, but you hide it all by irony. A beautiful keepsake we have of him, his portrait by Hensel, three-quarter life-size, the likeness perfect—a truly delightful, amiable picture. He is sitting on a garden bench (the background formed by lilac-bushes in our garden), the right arm reposing on the back of the bench, the left on his knees, with uplifted fingers. The expression of his face and the movement of his hands show that he is composing. But now let me tell you about the 'Passion.'

Felix and Devrient had been talking for a long time of the

possibility of a representation, but the plan had neither form nor shape until one evening at our house they settled the affair, and walked off the next morning in bran-new yellow kid gloves (very important in their eyes) to the managers of the academy. They very carefully minced the matter, and in all possible discreetness put the question whether they might be allowed the use of the concert-hall for a charitable purpose. In that case, and as the music they were going to perform was likely to be very successful, they offered to give a second performance for the benefit of the academy. This the gentlemen declined with thanks, and preferred to insist on a fixed payment of fifty thalers, leaving the profits to the disposal of the concert-givers. By-the-by, they are still ruminating over that reply of theirs! Zelter made no objections, and the rehearsals began on the Friday following. Felix went over the whole score, made a few judicious cuts, and only instrumented the recitative, 'And the veil of the temple was rent in twain.' Everything else was left untouched. The people were astonished, stared, admired; and when, after a few weeks, the rehearsals in the academy itself commenced, their faces became *very* long with surprise at the existence of such a work, about which they, the members of the Berlin Academy, knew nothing. After having got over their astonishment, they began to study with true, warm interest. The thing itself, the novelty and originality of the form, took hold of them, the subject was universally comprehensible and engaging, and Devrient sang the recitatives most beautifully. The genial spirit and enthusiasm evinced by all the singers during the very first rehearsals, and which each new rehearsal kindled to ever-increasing love and ardour; the delight and surprise created by each new element—the solos, the orchestra, Felix's splendid interpretation and his accompanying the first rehearsals at the piano from beginning to end *by heart*, all these were moments never to be forgotten. Zelter, who had lent his help at the first rehearsals, gradually retreated, and during the later rehearsals, as well as at the concerts, with praiseworthy resignation took his seat among the audience. And now the members of the academy themselves spread such a favourable report about the music, and such a general and

vivid interest was created in all classes, that on the very day after the first advertisement of the concert all the tickets were taken, and during the latter days upwards of a thousand people applied in vain. On Wednesday, March 10,[1] the first representation took place, and excepting a few slight mistakes of the solo-singers it may be called a perfect success. We were the first in the orchestra. As soon as the doors were opened, the people, who already had been long waiting outside, rushed into the hall, which was quite full in less than a quarter of an hour. I sat at the corner, where I could see Felix very well, and had gathered the strongest alto-voices around me. The choruses were sung with a fire, a striking power, and also with a touching delicacy and softness the like of which I have never heard, except at the second concert, when they surpassed themselves. Taking for granted that you still remember its dramatic form, I send you a textbook, just mentioning that the account of the evangelist was sung by Stümer, the words of Jesus by Devrient, of Peter by Bader, the High-priest and Pilate by Busolt, Judas by Weppler. Mmes. Schätzel, Milder, and Türrschmiedt sang the soprano and alto parts exquisitely. The room was crowded, and had all the air of a church: the deepest quiet and most solemn devotion pervaded the whole, only now and then involuntary utterances of intense emotion were heard. What is so often erroneously maintained of such like undertakings truly and fully applies to this one, that a peculiar spirit and general higher interest prevaded the concert, that everybody did his duty to the best of his powers, and many did more. Rietz, for instance, who with the help of his brother and brother-in-law had undertaken to copy the parts of all the different instruments, refused all pay for himself and the other two. Most singers declined accepting the tickets offered to them, or else paid for them; so that for the first concert only six free tickets were issued (of which Spontini had two), and for the second none at all. Even before the first concert the many who had not been able to gain admission raised a loud cry for a repetition, and the industrial schools petitioned to subscribe; but by this time Spontini was on the alert, and—with the greatest

[1] It was really March 11.

amiability—tried to prevent a second performance. Felix and Devrient, however, took the straightest course, and procured an order from the crown-prince, who from the beginning had taken a lively interest in the enterprise, and so the concert was repeated on Saturday, March 21, Bach's birthday: the same crowd, and a still greater audience, for the ante-room and the small rehearsal-room behind the audience were added, and all tickets sold. The choruses were perhaps still more exquisite than the first time, the instruments splendid; only one sad mistake of Milder's, and a few slight shortcomings in the solos, put a damp on Felix's spirits—but on the whole I may say that better success could not be desired.

Heine is here, and I do not like him at all, he is so affected. If he would let himself go, he would of all eccentric men be the most amiable; or if in good earnest he would keep a tight hand over himself, gravity also would become him, for he is grave too. But he gives himself sentimental airs, is affectedly affected, talks incessantly of himself, and all the while looks at you to see whether you look at him. Have you, by the way, met with his 'Reisebilder' from Italy? They contain delightful things; and though for ten times you may be inclined to despise him, the eleventh time you cannot help confessing that he is a poet, a true poet! How he manages the words! What a feeling he has for nature, such as only a real poet has!

I nearly forgot to thank you for concluding only from my engagement card that I am but a woman like all the others. I for my part have known this long ago, and also that a bridegroom is no more than a man after all. But the way the lords of creation remind us every day and all day of the weaknesses of our sex, might make us disclaim and forget both our shortcomings and our privileges, which would only make the matter worse.

Hensel is at present upon a life-size portrait (nearly the whole figure) of Gans, who, a mixture of man, child, and savage as he is, rejoices immensely to see himself on canvas. We see him very often, and he has a great friendship for Rebecca, upon whom he has even forced a Greek lesson, in which these

two learned persons read Plato. I do not know anything more grotesque. It stands to reason that gossip will translate this Platonic union into a real one, and the whole town talk of them as an engaged couple, which of course is a thing not to be thought of.

Now tell me whether there ever was a more gossiping letter! You said you must refrain from newspaper details in your letter of congratulation; but in your next do tell me the opinion of London society about the Roman Catholic emancipation, of which the papers say nothing. I follow the movement with eager interest. But what annoys me in this and politics altogether is that the end of it is generally disappointment. For months and months there is a vast hue and cry, and the result is all but invisible. All news, however, is doubly interesting when it comes from a country where one has a friend. I, for my part, can never see the heading 'London' without conjecturing that I shall read your name among those of the peers, or the petitioners against the Catholics, or in some other character, and in return I give you credit for so much sympathy that in reading the *Berliner Zeitung* you will expect to find me decorated with the order of the Red Eagle or promoted to the dignity of a *Hofrath* or *Auctionscommissarius*.

A great number of highly interesting persons frequented the house of the Mendelssohns during this period. Vol. VIII. of Hensel's portrait collection contains good likenesses of Heine, Paganini, Mme. Milder, Ludwig Robert the poet, and his wife Frederike Robert, celebrated for her beauty, and Hegel. Alexander von Humboldt, who was then occupied with experiments in magnetism, had arranged an observatory in the garden, on account of the silence and quiet of the place, and thus he and Professor Encke were almost daily, and also at times (when their observations required it) nightly, among the visitors. A few years later this brought about a very amusing scene, of which Fanny Hensel gives the following description:—

. . . I must tell you of a romantic adventure that happened here the other day. In the night I hear somebody

entering our bedroom and passing out again at the other side. I call—no answer. Wilhelm awakes, and cries out, 'Who (in the devil's name) is there?' Enter with majestic step Louise,[1] saying that she heard thieves rummaging about in the hall and then going into the garden with a lantern. She had thought it her duty to wake somebody, but had only wanted to call the servant, and was very sorry for having disturbed us. Wilhelm gets up, wraps himself in a red blanket, and goes into the hall with a drawn sword, Louise in her dressing-gown and night-cap showing him a light. He opened the door just in time, for the thief with his lantern was on the point of escaping towards the garden. When he heard the noise he looked round, and seeing a naked sword ran away, Wilhelm after him. The thief, however, must have been well acquainted with the premises, for he made off straight to the gardener's lodge. When they were both in the gardener's room they stopped, and pursuer and pursued burst into a peal of laughter. 'Professor Hensel!' 'Professor Encke, I beg you a thousand pardons, but I took you for a burglar, and my sister Louise took you for a thief.'

How much Louise has been teased about her vigilance you may imagine.

[1] Hensel's sister, then staying with them.

FELIX IN ENGLAND.

On April 10, 1829, Felix started for England. His father and Rebecca accompanied him as far as Hamburg, and thither Fanny directed to him the following farewell letter:—

April 15, 1829.

Although we have only written yesterday, I feel as if I must send you a few lines on the eve of your embarkation. Give it what name you like, sentimentality or anything else, you cannot call it worse, and I find a pleasure in glancing from our quiet *tête-à-tête* into that varied life of yours. You cannot possibly at such a moment spare time for my contemplative mood; but never mind, it is an old saying, 'Everybody writes to himself.' I write to myself.

When you receive this the watch-word will be, To-morrow for England. I remember your saying one day that we are apt to feel overpowered when somehow we hold an episode of our life in our own hand. Such it seems at present. Is there in the world any printer's border to be compared to the uniting and still so disuniting ocean? The sea is *the* aquafortis, may chemists say what they like. And to be on the other side of it by yourself, so free and young, with your capacities and prospects—a wonderful idea!

It is assuredly our special privilege, and a favour of heaven we can never enough acknowledge, that you are *you*; and may it remain so.

Even if you have the spleen, like real John Bull, I know you could not help laughing when I tell you that Mme. Milder yesterday tried your aria with me in the back-room and is enchanted with it, but that nevertheless I am to phrase it for her.

Can there be anything more foolish? Ridiculous as I consider such a request, I shall yet comply with it, as your handwriting in the manuscript score shows how thoroughly sick you have become of the matter.

I direct my letter to you, Rebecca, and in case it is not in time to reach Felix you may do what you like with it.

A thousand loves to father from mother and me. Mother has gone into the garden to look at the opening buds. We shall have to enjoy all that without you (I mean Felix) now!

Felix.— London: April 21, 1829.

Dearest Father and dearest Rebecca,—Having just reached London, the first thing I do is to send you word of my safe arrival. Our passage was not good, and was very long, for we only landed at the Custom-house to-day (Tuesday) at twelve o'clock. From Saturday evening to Monday afternoon we had contrary winds, and such a storm that all on board were ill. We had once to stop for a while on account of a dense fog, and then again in order to repair the engine; even last night at the mouth of the Thames we were obliged to cast anchor to avoid a collision with other ships. Fancy, moreover, that from Sunday morning to Monday evening I had one fainting fit after another, from disgust with myself and everything about the boat, cursing England, and particularly my own 'Meeresstille,' and scolding the waiter with all my might. When on Monday at noon I asked him if London was yet to be seen, he calmly replied that before Tuesday at noon there was no chance of it. But let me turn to the bright side and tell you of the moonlight last night on the sea and the many hundreds of vessels gliding round about us, of our sail up the Thames early this morning between green meadows and smoky towns, of our running a race with twenty steamers, soon getting ahead of all the others, and finally beholding the awful mass of London.

My ideas are still as incoherent as the last sentence, and I only write this letter to tell you of my safe passage: do not therefore expect anything further. I will at once write to Berlin, as a post by Rotterdam gets there in four days. I must also go to my lodgings (for here I am still sitting in Klinge-

mann's room, who is prevented by business from sending his *manu propria* respects). I must find Moscheles, who expects me; I must eat *some dinner*, not having done so for three days (oh, I am so wretched!); I must be shaved; in short, I must be made to look human again. Meanwhile, goodbye.

FELIX.

London: April 25, 1829.

It is fearful! It is maddening! I am quite giddy and confused. London is the grandest and most complicated monster on the face of the earth. How can I compress into one letter what I have been three days seeing? I hardly remember the chief events, and yet I must not keep a diary, for then I should see less of life, and that must not be. On the contrary, I want to catch hold of whatever offers itself to me. Things roll and whirl round me and carry me along as in a vortex. Not in the last six months at Berlin have I seen so many contrasts and such variety as in these three days. Could you but once, turning to the right from my lodging, walk down Regent Street and see the wide bright street with its arcades (alas! it is enveloped in a thick fog to-day!), and the shops with letters as big as men, and the stage-coaches piled up with people, and a row of vehicles outrun by the foot-passengers because in one place the smart carriages have stopped the way! Here a horse prances to a house where its rider has friends. There you see men used as ambulating advertisement-boards on which the most graceful achievements of accomplished cats are promised. Then there are beggars, negroes, and those fat John Bulls with their slender, beautiful two daughters hanging on their arms. Ah, those daughters! However, do not be alarmed, there's no danger in that quarter, neither in Hyde Park, so rich in ladies, where I drove about yesterday in a fashionable way with Mme. Moscheles, nor in the concerts, nor in the opera (I have been to all these places already); only at the corners and crossings there *is* danger, and there I sometimes say to myself softly, in a well-known voice, 'Take care lest you get run over.' Such a whirl, such a roar! But I will become historical, and quietly relate my doings, else you will learn nothing about me.

Could you but see me at the exquisite grand-piano which Clementis have sent me for the whole time of my stay here, by the cheerful fireside in my own four walls, with shoes and gray filigree stockings and olive-coloured gloves (for I am just going out to pay a visit), and could you see the immense four-post bed in the next room, in which I might *go* to sleep in the most literal sense of the word, the many-coloured curtains and quaint furniture, my breakfast tea with dry toast still before me, the servant girl in curl-papers who has just brought me my newly hemmed black necktie, and asks what further orders I have, whereupon I try at a polite backward nod, *à l'Anglaise*, and could you but see the highly respectable, fog-enveloped street and hear the pitiable voice with which a beggar down there pours forth his ditty (he will soon be outscreamed by the street sellers), and could you picture to yourselves that from here to the City is three quarters of an hour's drive, and that in all the cross streets of which one has glimpses the noise, clamour, and bustle are the same, if not greater, and that after that one has only traversed about a quarter of London, then you might understand how it is that I am half distracted. However, let me be historical.

After I had sent off my last invalid letter to you, Klingemann took me at once to an English coffee-house (everything is English here), where of course I read the *Times*, and in my true Berlin way looked first for the theatrical news, and saw that 'Otello' and the first appearance of Mme. Malibran were announced for that very night. In spite of weariness and the feeling of sea-sickness still about me, I resolved to go. Klingemann lent me the necessary gray stockings, as I could not find mine in the hurry, and yet had to appear in full dress, with a black cravat, like all the rest of the genteel world. Then I went to my lodgings, and from there to the Italian opera, King's Theatre, where I got a seat in the pit (half a guinea)—a large house, decorated with crimson, six tiers of boxes with crimson curtains, out of which peep the ladies, bedecked with great white feathers, chains, jewels of all kinds. An odour of pomade and perfume assails you as you enter, which gave me a headache: in the pit all the gentlemen, with fresh-trimmed

whiskers, the house crowded, the orchestra very good, conducted by a Signor Spagnoletti (in December I will give you an imitation of him which will make you die of laughter). Donzelli (Otello), a bravura performer ingeniously ornamental, shouts and forces his voice tremendously, almost constantly sings a little too high, but with no end of *haut goût* (for instance, in the last passionate scene, where Malibran screams and raves almost disagreeably, instead of shouting the recitatives, as he usually does, he drops his voice, so that the last bars are scarcely audible). Mme. Malibran is a young woman, beautiful and splendidly made, her hair *en toupet*, full of fire and power, very coquettish, setting off her performance partly with very clever embellishments of her own invention, partly with imitations from Pasta (it impressed me strangely to see her take the harp and sing the whole scene exactly like Pasta, and copy her also in that vaguely floating passage which I am sure you, dear father, must remember). She plays beautifully, her attitudes are good, and it is only a pity she should so often exaggerate and then nearly touch the ridiculous and disagreeable. However, I shall constantly go to hear her—only not to-morrow, when 'Otello' is to be repeated. This I only wish to hear again when Sontag appears in it: she is daily expected. Levasseur, by-the-by, is something of a 'beer-bass,' and Curioni a 'semi-beer-tenor,' and yet they were furiously applauded, with hands and feet. After the second act came a long *divertissement*, with gymnastics and absurdities just as with us, that went on till half past eleven o'clock. I was almost tired to death, but held out till a quarter to one, when Malibran was despatched, panting and screaming disagreeably. Then I had had enough of it, and so went home. But it must have been long before the theatre was over, for after the play was to come the celebrated ballet 'La Sonnambule.' I had always to catch a firm hold of my seat, because I felt as if the whole house were swinging to and fro; nor did this giddy sensation leave me until yesterday, and last night for the first time it did not disturb my sleep. On the day after 'Otello,' when I was still fast asleep, a soft hand touched me very gently, and that could only be Moscheles, who

sat by my bed for about an hour, giving me all possible information.

For the manner in which Moscheles and his wife behave to me I cannot find any expression. Whatever can be agreeable, profitable, honourable for me, they know how to procure. Yesterday morning, in spite of his overwhelming business, he drove about with me to Latour's, Cramer's, Clementis', Neukomm's; and when last night I was obliged to play my violoncello variations at his house, and had not quite finished copying the parts, he copied the remaining half whilst I was out at dinner. Mme. Moscheles took me yesterday in her elegant carriage to Hyde Park: to-day she will show me Regent's Park in the same way. Think of me in a cabriolet, taking a drive with a lady!—me, in my new suit, of course. Then she drove me to Bülow's, and when I had finished my long visit and came down, she was waiting for me in the carriage, saying that I could not find my way alone. In short, they are both of them kindness itself.

May 1, 1829.

I am in very good health: London life suits me excellently. I think the town and the streets quite beautiful. Again I was struck with awe when yesterday I drove in an open carriage to the City, along a different road, and everywhere found the same flow of life, everywhere green, red, yellow bills stuck on the houses from top to bottom, or gigantic letters painted on them, everywhere noise and smoke, everywhere the end of the streets lost in fog. Every few moments I passed a church, or a market-place, or a green square, or a theatre, or caught a glimpse of the Thames, on which the steamers can now go right through the town under all the bridges, because an invention has been made for letting down the large funnels, in the way masts are lowered. Last not least, to see the masts from the West India Docks stretching their heads over the housetops, and to see a harbour as big as the Hamburg one treated like a mere pond, with sluices, and the ships arranged not singly but in rows, like regiments—to see all that makes one's heart rejoice at the greatness of the world.

The other day I went to see Dr. Spurzheim's phrenological cabinet, shown by a young physician. A set of murderers placed in contrast with a set of musicians interested me highly, and my belief in physiognomy received strong confirmation; indeed, the difference between Gluck's forehead and that of a parricide is very striking, and does away with all doubt. But when people want to enter into minute detail and show me where Gluck had his bump of music and where that of the inventive power, or exactly where the philosophy is lodged in Socrates's skull, that is very precarious, and in my eyes unscientific, although it may lead to such most interesting results as the following. A beautiful young English lady who was there desired to know whether she had a propensity for stealing or any other crime, and it ended in a phrenological examination of the whole party present. One was pronounced good-natured, another fond of children, this lady courageous, that lady avaricious; and as the aforesaid young creature had to undo her long fair hair and allow the doctor to feel the bumps, and looked very beautiful with her hair loose and when tying it up again before the glass, I gave three cheers for phrenology, and warmly praised everything concerning it. That I possessed a taste for music and some imagination was obvious: the doctor found afterwards that I was rather covetous, loved order and little children, and liked flirting; music, however, he declared to be predominant. On Tuesday I am to have a plaster mask taken of my whole head, face and all, and then I will control Hensel's likeness.

London: May 15, 1829.

On Monday evening, ball in Devonshire House at the Duke of Devonshire's; magnificence reminding me of the Arabian Nights; all that riches, luxury, and taste for the beautiful can procure and invent accumulated there. With my hackney coach I got into the file of carriages that extended almost all along Piccadilly, therefore I preferred to get out and walk up to the house. I entered the drawing-room, where the Duke courteously received his guests. Behind me on the stairs I heard people coming up; but I did not look round, and now I

perceived, awe-struck, that they were Wellington and Peel. In the principal dancing-room, instead of a hanging lustre there was a thick broad wreath of red roses, about fourteen feet in diameter, which appeared to float in the air, as the thin threads that held it up were carefully hidden; upon it were burning hundreds of little lights. The walls were covered with portraits, life-size and full length, by Vandyck; all along the walls there was an estrade, on which sat the mammas, excessively ornamented with diamonds, pearls, and all kinds of jewels; in the middle of the room were the lovely girls dancing, some of them quite heavenly for beauty; an orchestra with its own director made the music. Beyond this was a suite of other rooms, the walls of which were covered with Titians, Corregios, Lionardos, and Dutch paintings. To move among these beautiful pictures and lovely living forms, and to wander about in all that flow of life and universal excitement, perfectly quiet and unknown, and, unnoticed and unseen, to notice and to see—it was one of the most charming nights I remember. A portrait of a young man by Titian and one of a young woman by Lionardo made a deep impression on me. Nowhere in the whole palace did I find anything imperfect or inharmonious; the library was open, and books of art lay on the tables; a little conservatory opened out of the dancing-room, and spread a cool and fragrant atmosphere! Abundance of fruit of all seasons was heaped on the buffets. It was amusing to see the young noblemen making love to the ladies and waltzing abominably, and to see ladies sitting on tables and gentlemen lying on the sofas, their feet up and at full length, whilst keeping up a tender conversation!

I was yesterday at a similar grand *fête* at the Marquis of Lansdowne's. Poor man, he had opened his sculpture gallery, and received his guests there; a large vaulted room, with a rotunda, lighted from above at both ends; in the rotunda there are crimson niches, in each of which stands a large gray antique statue frowning down. At their feet sat the old ladies in a semicircle, and in the middle of the saloon people thronged hither and thither. In the adjoining room was exhibited a newly purchased landscape by Claude Lorraine, representing the

rising sun over a sea-port. The stairs are so constructed that one can see them all the way up to the roof, as in the Hamburg houses, and they were lavishly decorated with flowers, out of which appeared recumbent statues. A thousand details I will some day tell you when I come home: I shall not forget them, for everything appeared to me so new and admirable that it made a deep impression, not easily to be effaced. That such magnificence could really exist in our time I had not believed. These are not parties—they are festivals and celebrations.

London: May 26, 1829.

When I entered the Argyll Rooms for the rehearsal of my symphony and found the whole orchestra assembled and about two hundred listeners, chiefly ladies, strangers to me, and when, first, Mozart's symphony in E flat major was rehearsed, after which my own was to follow, I felt not exactly afraid but nervous and excited. During the Mozart pieces I took a little walk in Regent Street and looked at the people; when I returned, everything was ready and waiting for me. I mounted the orchestra and pulled out my white stick, which I have had made on purpose (the maker took me for an alderman, and would insist on decorating it with a crown). The first violin, François Cramer, showed me how the orchestra was placed—the furthest rows had to get up so that I could see them—and introduced me to them all, and we bowed to each other; some perhaps laughed a little, that this small fellow with the stick should now take the place of their regular powdered and bewigged conductor. Then it began. For the first time it went very well and powerfully, and pleased the people much even at rehearsal. After each movement the whole audience and the whole orchestra applauded (the musicians showing their approval by striking their instruments with their bows and stamping their feet); after the finale they made a great noise, and as I had to make them repeat it, because it was badly played, they set up the same noise once more; the directors came to me in the orchestra, and I had to go down and make a great many bows. Cramer was overjoyed, and loaded me with praise and compliments. I walked about on the orchestra, and had to

shake at least two hundred different hands. It was one of the happiest moments within my recollection, for one half-hour had transformed all those strangers into friends and acquaintances. But the success at the concert last night was beyond what I could ever have dreamed. It began with the symphony; old François Cramer led me to the piano like a young lady, and I was received with immense applause. The adagio was encored—I prefered to bow my thanks and go on, for fear of tiring the audience; but the scherzo was so vigorously encored that I felt obliged to repeat it, and after the finale they continued applauding, while I was thanking the orchestra and shaking hands, and until I had left the room. . . .

Fanny to Klingemann.

Berlin: June 4, 1829.

. . . You will not misunderstand me when I tell you that Felix's success has neither surprised, dazzled, nor confounded me, and that altogether as regards him I have an almost silly belief in predestination. Be that as it may, such letters as his of yesterday and yours of to-day give me an indescribable pleasure, and with a similar sensation do I perceive that you fondle and spoil him to *exactly* the extent that I desire, and as I requested you to do (if I remember rightly, in rather a sentimental letter). Here comes again a little request: Felix will receive by the next courier a parcel containing love-tokens and sentimental keepsakes; be so kind and carry it to him yourself, and take care that it find him in good humour; and should a copyist or a fly just then have vexed him, better keep it till some better day. Ah, dear Klingemann, the more you feel and enjoy his presence and the life he carries wherever he goes, the more you can understand how keenly we feel the void; and the more we beg you to write very often, for your letters are food to the hungry, and as it hurts us to hear those slighted whom we love, so we feel invigorated and happy at our beloved ones being judged fondly. May our own persuasion be ever so strong, we relish that of other people.

Felix to the Family.

June 7, 1829.

. . . On Saturday I was to play at a concert, and I had never yet tried the strange new Clementi grand-piano which the firm had sent for my use. I went into the empty concert-room, where my symphony had been performed, and which now echoed with every footstep, and I felt a little moved. The piano was locked; the key had to be sent for, but did not come. Meanwhile I sat down to the old gray instrument, on which the fingers of several generations may have played, meaning to practise my piece thoroughly, but I fell unawares into strange fantasies, and dwelt on them until people began to come in and remind me that I ought to have been studying—only the large hall made me think of something else—in short, the concert hour (two o'clock) approached, and I had never touched the instrument. However, I kept up my spirits, and put myself into *grande toilette* (for Becky's journal of fashions: very long white trousers, brown silk waistcoat, black neck-tie, and blue dress coat). When I mounted the orchestra and found it quite filled with ladies, who had not been able to find a place in the room, and when I saw the room fuller than it ever had been, so many gay ladies' bonnets, and the fearful heat, and the unknown instrument, a panic came over me, and up to the moment when I went on I felt exceedingly nervous, I think even feverish. But as the gay bonnets gave me a nice reception and applauded when I came in, as they were very attentive and quiet (which with this talkative concert public is a rare thing), and as I found the instrument very excellent and of a light touch, I lost all my timidity, became quite comfortable, and was highly amused to see the bonnets agitated at every little cadenza, which to me and many critics brought to mind the simile of the wind and the tulip-bed; and I noticed that some ladies in the orchestra were very handsome, and that Sir George, on whom I cast a feeling glance, took a pinch of snuff. It went pretty well, and they applauded greatly when it was over; also the *Times*, which I read over my tea in the morn-

ing, has bestowed much praise on me (Paul might go with Rietz to Stehely's and read the said *Times* of Monday, June 1, and I promise him sixpence for it on my return). I was immensely pleased to find that the public here is good to me and likes me, and that I owe a great many more acquaintances to my music than to my letters of introduction, which really were powerful and numerous enough—in short, I was very happy on Saturday; and at the dinner-party to which I afterwards went I became intoxicated, but only from the effect of two very wonderful brown eyes, such as the world has never yet seen, or not often. To describe or praise them is unnecessary, for if they please you I shall be jealous *par distance,* and if they do not please you I shall be vexed—that, however, is impossible. The lady next to me had the said brown eyes, and they are wondrously beautiful, and their name is Louise, and their owner spoke English and retired at dessert, whereupon I immediately drank claret, as I had nothing more to see. I had to be off into the country, found no carriage, and was obliged to walk in the cool of the evening; many musical ideas came into my mind, which I sang out loud to myself, for I went a lonely path through meadows, and met no one; the whole sky was gray, with a purple streak on the horizon, and the thick cloud of smoke behind me. As soon as I find some quiet, either here or in Scotland, I will write various things, and the Scottish bagpipe shall not exist in vain. That night I remained in the country, and then drove with G. on a fresh damp morning to Richmond in a little cabriolet. The way goes over the suspension-bridge, through villages with houses covered with roses instead of vines, so that the fresh flowers on the smoky walls have a strange effect. In Richmond, on a hill which commands a view of the immeasurable green plain studded with trees, close at hand, bright, warm, green, and (not a thousand yards off) blue, hazy, and fading away; and where you see Windsor on one side, and London on the other in a misty cloud, there we laid ourselves down and spent our Sunday very quietly and solemnly. I have been intrusted with a commission, and you will laugh immensely when you hear what it is. It gives me great pleasure, as it is quite unique, and possible

only in London. I am to compose a festival song for a celebration which is to take place in—Ceylon! The natives some time ago were emancipated, and intend keeping the anniversary of the event, and are to sing a song on the occasion; and Sir Alexander Johnston, the governor of Ceylon, has given me the order. It is really very mad and droll; and for two whole days I have laughed at it to myself.

London: June 19, 1829.

There are pictures here such as the world has never seen. An art exhibition has just been opened entirely composed of contributions from private owners, and these divine creations are assembled in three saloons. I cannot give you an idea of the sight. Rubens has painted the Tribute Money, and Titian his young daughter. How many thoughts must have crossed the old fellow's mind as that fair child stood before him, so graceful and erect, and in such handsome and nonchalant attire, holding an apple in her hand and thinking of nothing particular! There are two glorious pieces of Vandyck, and a lot of Rembrandts, Murillos, Ruisdaels, and Claudes. Delightful! Titian has so embodied Ignatius Loyola that one feels Roman Catholic in gazing at him, he looks out of the picture so gloomy and grave. And Rubens's 'Jews' are like bears and wolves let loose.

Good-bye. On Wednesday I shall, to the dismay of all musicians, play Beethoven's concerto in E flat. I've have enough of that dry tone—and must play Beethoven once again.

London: June 25, 1829.

I long for you all, and to-day especially. It is summer, and the season is coming to an end. This is the first evening I have spent alone in my room, and I will employ it in holding a congress with you. Outside the people are walking and whistling tunes from 'Masaniello' and 'Freischütz,' and the carriages in Regent Street making a desperate noise. You are sitting in the sofa-corners; I wedge myself between, and now for it. My diary will follow on the next page. First of all,

what is your opinion of the programme for the silver wedding in December? Send me your ideas about it by return of post; if it is not to turn out at least as splendid as your imperial entrance procession, I shall at once resign and take no part in it. I give my humble opinion for a grand piece of music with new Scotch compositions, in which you, O eldest otter, must join (hear, hear! cheers; hurrah; order, order!). Braham ought to sing an aria, and Neate play a concerto; nothing, by-the-by, can be done without a comedy, a masquerade, a dinner-party, and a ball ('hear!' on the left). Although I approve of quiet weddings, silver weddings must be noisy. If you want a steam-engine for it, I can send it you through the legation: the expense is trifling, as a steam-engine for the construction of steam-engines has just been invented here. Or shall we present father with a little East Indiaman? Or shall we by way of surprise have the yard paved or macadamised? Fancy! 'If instead of twenty such stupid proposals somebody had but a single sensible one!' Well, then, do make proposals, ye people! Write me a regular hand-bill with *a*, *b*, *c* and 1, 2, 3; in short, a systematic programme. I am hatching great things, but cannot talk about them to-day, for I am so tired that you would feel obliged to lead me across the yard and then bid me go away from the open window; it is from dancing.

In the evening I went with Rosen, Mühlenfels, and Klingemann to Covent Garden: 'Hamlet.' I believe, children, that he was right who said that the English sometimes do not understand Shakespeare. At least this representation was extravagant; and yet Kemble played Hamlet, and in his way played him well. But, alas! that way is crazy, and ruins the whole piece. His appearing, for instance, with one yellow and one black leg, to indicate madness, his falling before the ghost in order to strike an attitude, his screaming out the end of every little phrase in that regular applause-exacting high tone of his, his behaving altogether like a John Bull Oxford student, and not like a Danish crown prince, all that might pass. But that he should not the least enter into poor Shakespeare's intention as to killing the king, and therefore coolly skip that scene where the king prays and Hamlet comes in and goes out again without having made

up his mind for the deed (to my taste one of the finest passages of the piece), and that he constantly behaves like a *bravado*, treating the king in such a way that he deserves to be shot down at once, for instance during the play on the stage threatening him with his fist and shouting into his ear the words that he should have quietly dropped—these are things not to be pardoned. Of course Laertes and Hamlet do not jump into Ophelia's tomb and wrestle there, for they never guess why they should do so: and at the end, when Hamlet falls down and says, 'The rest is silence,' and I expected a flourish and Fortinbras, Horatio actually leaves the prince, hastily comes forward to the lamps, and says, 'Ladies and gentlemen, to-morrow evening "The Devil's Elixir."' Thus ended 'Hamlet' in England. Of what they skip or abridge one might make a tragedy in itself: the instructions of Polonius; the leave-taking of Laertes from Ophelia, half of a monologue of Hamlet, etc., never appear. Some things however they gave excellently, for instance the grave-digger scene. The old clown made wonderfully coarse jests, and sang his song in the grave unmusically and very, very beautifully. Ophelia too in her madness once sang quite madly; whilst the others were talking she murmured a low melody; the fencing and changing of rapiers, too, was done very cleverly. But what is all that? There is little poetry in England. Really!

London: July 10, 1829.

. . . What has of late occupied me almost exclusively is the concert for the Silesians; as regards the choice of the pieces, it will no doubt be the most brilliant of the season; whoever has at all created a sensation in the season will cooperate, most of them gratuitously; many offers of good performers have necessarily been declined, as the concert without them will last till the next day. Klingemann will send you the immense programme; it is really interesting. My overture to the 'Midsummer-night's Dream' will form the beginning, by request, and then I shall play the double concerto in E with Moscheles. Yesterday we had a first trial in Clementi's piano manufactory. Mrs. Moscheles and Mr. Collard were our audi-

ence. It was great fun; no one has an idea how Moscheles and I coquetted together on the piano, how the one constantly imitated the other, and how sweet we were. Moscheles plays the last movement with wonderful brilliancy, the runs dropped from his fingers like magic. When it was over, all said it was a pity that we had made no cadenza, so I at once hit upon a passage in the first part of the last tutti, where the orchestra has a pause, and Moscheles had *nolens volens* to comply and compose a grand cadenza. We now deliberated, amid a thousand jokes, whether the last small solo should remain in its place, since of course the people would applaud the cadenza. 'We must have a bit of tutti between the cadenza and the solo,' said I. 'How long are they to clap their hands?' asked Moscheles. 'Ten minutes, I dare say,' said I. Moscheles beat me down to five. I promised to supply a tutti, and so we took the measure, embroidered, turned and padded, put in sleeves *à la* Mameluke, and at last with our mutual tailoring we produced a brilliant concerto. We shall have another rehearsal to-day: it will be quite a picnic, for Moscheles brings the cadenza and I the tutti. To-morrow at two, the great instrumental rehearsal is to come off; after that I have a treat in prospect. I am invited to dinner by a Mr. Richmond with many daughters, who lives at Stamford Hill, a green village, full of trees, gardens, and roses. Rosen and Mühlenfels are also going. As we are to breakfast with other acquaintances in the same place on Sunday morning, we have resolved to stay over-night at the village inn, go into the fields in the morning, and astonish the people by our early appearance. This plan will be carried out, and we shall behave ourselves in an excessively grand and right London manner in our tavern.

Saturday is the day of universal leave-taking, and starting for all the four corners of the world. Klingemann and I shall wend our way northwards, Rosen to the Rhine, and Mühlenfels —to Berlin. Yes, yes! He will see you sooner than I. Pray love him and be kind to him! When I tell you that he chiefly has filled up or made less sensible the gap that arises from a first isolation and want of familiar intercourse, a gap that is even increased by parties and distracting gaieties; when you

hear that to him especially I owe that healthy and happy feeling which hitherto has rarely left me even in the greatest noise and whirl, I am sure you will be glad to see him and show him kindness. He is a sturdy, hearty, excellent fellow. He will tell you many jolly anecdotes of our London time, for we are rich in them. We shall soon separate now, and have promised each other to make the most of the few days we shall yet be together. The other day we three walked home from a highly diplomatic dinner-party at Bülow's, having had our fill of fashionable dishes, sayings, and doings. We passed a very enticing sausage shop, in which 'German sausages, twopence each' were laid out for show. Patriotism overcame us, each bought a long sausage, we turned into where it was quieter, Portland Street, and there consumed our purchases, Rosen and I being hardly able, for laughing, to join in the three-part songs of which Mühlenfels would sing the bass. Both of them had closed their lectures that same day, and had therefore nothing to apprehend. Rosen sometimes became quite wild.

The year 1829 was remarkable for misery of various kinds from natural catastrophes. The Dantzig neighbourhood and Silesia were heavily afflicted. Nathan, Moses Mendelssohn's youngest son, who lived in Silesia, had written to his brother Abraham about the wretchedness existing there, and the latter had communicated the intelligence to Felix in London. Thus originated the concert for the Silesians, the rehearsal of which has been already mentioned; and the result Felix describes in the following letter to Nathan:—

London: July 16, 1829.

Dear Uncle,—It is long since I wrote to you, and so much the more gladly do I embrace the present opportunity of sending you good and pleasant news. Your country-people have to thank your letter to my father, in which you describe the misfortune caused by rain and floods, for a very considerable pecuniary aid, which will in a few weeks reach its destination through the embassy. I cannot tell you how heartily glad I am that they owe it first of all to your letter, and that I also had an

opportunity of helping. It happened thus: Sontag had after a great deal of persuasion promised to give a concert in May for the Dantzigers, but she did not appear to relish it very much, for she put it off till June, then till July, and finally, when her benefit turned out so badly that she was a loser by it, she gave up the whole idea. I was sorry for it, went to see her several times, spoke to her *homme d'affaires* and her lady companion—for she is surrounded by quite a little court, and admission to her presence is rarely given. Both declared themselves so decidedly averse, and became at last so impolite, that I went away with the intention of never returning. On the following day I received a letter from my parents containing a copy of yours, and I know not how it was, but I swore to myself that it *should* and *would* go, and that a concert must be given. A recollection started in my mind that you once lent me money for the bellows-blower at Reinerz, and would not take it back, first saying that my music had given you eight groschen's worth of pleasure, and then seriously adding that if some day I earned money by my playing I could give the amount to the poor. I also remembered how happy we were together at that time, and many other things, and forthwith ran off to Mme. Sontag, was not to be denied, refused to see the *homme d'affaires* and *dame de compagnie*, assailed her vigorously, assured her she must now give a concert, as it had been put in the *Staatszeitung*, and that the Silesians were in much greater want than the Dantzigers—in short, she resolved to undertake it. She alone, with her extensive connections, and in such favour with all classes, could venture to announce to the English a concert for the benefit of foreigners at a moment when the misery in London is so enormous, and when no one knows how to relieve it. Everything appeared against it: the musicians, taking into account the advanced season, prophesied an empty room, and some of them behaved very frigidly and unkindly, and urged that the expense was not likely to be covered. But I persisted, the concert was announced, many of the nobility accepted the patronage, all the great singers had to sing gratuitously *honoris causa*, many instrumental performers were under obligation to Sontag, many did it for my sake, not a name that had at all

distinguished itself in the season was wanting on the programme, and on a sudden the thing became *fashionable*. From that moment the good result was secured, the whole town spoke of it. When I passed the Argyle Rooms (also given gratuitously) an hour before the beginning of the concert last Monday, and saw the crowd of people, all those strange faces streaming and thronging in, and when afterwards I mounted the orchestra and found it all filled with beautiful ladies in elegant dress, all the boxes filled, the very ante-rooms full of people, I was indescribably happy and joyful, and only regretted that there was no larger concert room in London, for about a hundred people were refused. The receipts amounted to between two hundred and fifty and three hundred guineas, which have been transmitted to the Prussian ambassador, and through him will be sent to Silesia. English people could not guess how the thing had been brought about. It was stated in the programme that Sontag had received letters and requests from many high persons in her country: those were *you*. The *Times* even hinted that the King of Prussia had applied to Sontag: that was you again. The invitations for patronage were accompanied by vivid descriptions of the state of desolation, verbally translated from the account of an eye-witness: again you. In a word, we have blown the trumpet well, and to good purpose. The concert was unquestionably the best of the whole year; there was no time for an aria, many singers could only appear in quartets, etc., and nevertheless the concert lasted nearly four hours. Sontag sang six times, Drouet played his flute, Moscheles and I played a concerto of mine for two pianos; my overture to 'Midsummer-night's Dream' was also performed, etc.

Enough of this: the best thing is that it has been a success. Pray, dear uncle, write me some lines: my father will send them to the Scotch Highlands, whither I shall go in a few days. Tell me of yourself and of all your family, how you get on, and whether Arnold has still a taste for music and cultivates it. Give them all my best love, and think kindly of me. Farewell!—Yours,

FELIX MENDELSSOHN BARTHOLDY.

P.S.—Forgive me that my letter contains nothing but concert, concert, concert. It is the newest interest, and has occupied me very much, and the pen flows over when the heart is full. Ever since the matter began to be talked of I have looked forward to the pleasure of writing you this letter, and now here it is.

The letters to the Berlin family are likewise full of it. The following episode must not remain unnoticed:—

July 17, 1829.

. . . The concert for the Silesians was splendid, the best of the season; ladies peeped out from behind the double basses when I came on to the orchestra; the Johnston ladies, who had strayed between the bassoons and the French horns, sent to ask me *whether they were likely to hear well*; one lady sat on a kettledrum. Madames Rothschild and K. Antonio accommodated themselves on benches in the ante-room; in short, the affair was extremely brilliant.

Edinburgh: July 28, 1829.

It is Sunday when we arrive in Edinburgh; then we cross the meadows, going towards two desperately steep rocks, which are called Arthur's Seat, and climb up. Below on the green are walking the most variegated people, women, children, and cows; the city stretches far and wide; in the midst is the castle, like a bird's nest on a cliff; beyond the castle come meadows, then hills, then a broad river; beyond the river again hills; then a mountain rather more stern, on which towers Stirling Castle; then blue distance begins; further on you perceive a faint shadow, which they call Ben Lomond. All this is but one half of Arthur's Seat; the other is simple enough, it is the great blue sea, immeasurably wide, studded with white sails, black funnels, little insects of skiffs, boats, rocky islands, and such like. Why need I describe it? When God Himself takes to panorama-painting, it turns out strangely beautiful. Few of my Switzerland reminiscences can compare

to this; everything here looks so stern and robust, half enveloped in haze or smoke or fog; moreover, there is to be a bagpipe-competition to-morrow; many Highlanders came in costume from church, victoriously leading their sweethearts in their Sunday attire, and casting magnificent and important looks over the world; with long red beards, tartan plaids, bonnets and feathers, naked knees, and their bagpipes in their hands, they passed quietly along by the half-ruined gray castle on the meadow, where Mary Stuart lived in splendour and saw Rizzio murdered. I feel as if time went at a very rapid pace when I have before me so much that was and so much that is.

It is beautiful here! In the evening a cool breeze is wafted from the sea, and then all objects appear clearly and sharply defined against the gray sky; the lights from the windows glitter brilliantly; so it was yesterday when I walked up and down the streets with Mr. Ferguson (an Edinburgh 'friend of mine,' to whom Mr. Droop, a London 'friend of mine,' has introduced me), and called at the post-office for your letter of the 13th inst. I read it with a particular zest in Princes Street, Edinburgh. In Edinburgh, a letter from under the yew-tree in the Leipziger Strasse! My swim in the sea was pleasant too to-day, and afloat on the waves I thought of you all, how very closely we are linked together, and yet I was in the deep Scotch ocean, that tastes very briny. Dobberan is lemonade compared to it.

Whether I shall see Sir Walter Scott here, although I have a letter to him from one of his intimate friends in London, is quite uncertain; yet I hope so, chiefly to escape a scolding from you, dear mother, if I return without having seen the *lion*. The flower-seed I can only get for you when this trip is over, and am quite ashamed at not having sent it instead of scissors, needles, and so on; but really one forgets in London that there is such a thing as nature; and as one becomes strong-minded, cold, and indifferent, looking but just out of the window when there is a fire, to see the flames, and then quietly sleeping on if it is not very near, so nobody dreams of flowers belonging to the world, far less that seeds have anything to do

with them: one smells them, puts them into one's button-hole, and forgets them.

The Highland journey will be as follows: viâ Stirling, Perth, Dunkeld, and the waterfalls to Blair Athol; thence on foot over the hills to Inverary, to Glencoe, the Isle of Staffa, and the Isle of Islay; there a stay of several days will be made, because Sir Alexander Johnston has sent after me a letter of introduction to Sir Walter Campbell, the lord, owner, and tyrant of the island, whom a word of Johnston's tames and turns into a willing guide. From there up the Clyde to Glasgow, then to Ben Lomond, which with Loch Lomond forms *the* Highland *lion*, to Loch Earn, Ben Voirlich, Loch Katrine; then to Cumberland. What further shall I tell you? Time and space are coming to an end, and everything must terminate, in the refrain 'How kind the people are in Edinburgh, and how generous is the good God.' The Scotch ladies also deserve notice; and if Mahmud follows father's advice and turns Christian, I shall in his place become a Turk and settle in this neighbourhood.

Edinburgh: July 30, 1829.

Beloved Ones,—It is late at night, and this is my last day in the town of Edinburgh. To-morrow morning we go to Abbotsford to see Sir Walter Scott; the day after to-morrow, into the Highlands. The windows are open, for the weather is beautiful and the sky full of stars. Klingemann, in shirt sleeves, sits by my side writing. So much for scenery.

The bearer of this letter is a young man, T. Thompson, who has shown me much kindness here, and whom I have often had the pleasure of meeting at a mutual friend's. I earnestly beg of you to smooth down for him as much as possible any difficulties he may encounter in Berlin. I regret to say that he speaks neither German nor French, so you will have to do as if you were in Edinburgh, and talk English through thick and thin. He is very fond of music; I know a pretty trio of his composition and some vocal pieces, that please me very well, and he submits to the drawback of going to a country the language of which he does not know, merely to enjoy the

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advantages we have there. I beg you the more to be kind to him, and believe the more that you will fulfil my request, as I now know by experience how comforting it is to be amiably and kindly received in a strange land, and as hospitality abroad must be almost indispensable to an Englishman, who will incessantly feel the greatest difference between his locked-up country and all foreign lands.

Show him what will interest and please him; Fanny should play a good deal to him, he must hear her songs *performed* by Rebecca; give him a good notion of music *abroad*. Father once blamed me at Paris for not being kind enough to strangers, and justly so, I believe. But I have got over that fault now that I am far away from you; I have learnt to appreciate it. In such a spirit I offered him the letters to Berlin, for which he did not ask; now you must continue to befriend him.

In the evening twilight we went to-day to the palace where Queen Mary lived and loved; a little room is shown there with a winding staircase leading up to the door; up this way they came and found Rizzio in that little room, pulled him out, and three rooms off there is a dark corner, where they murdered him. The chapel close to it is now roofless, grass and ivy grow there, and at that broken altar Mary was crowned Queen of Scotland. Everything around is broken and mouldering, and the bright sky shines in. I believe I found to-day in that old chapel the beginning of my Scotch symphony. Now farewell!

Klingemann writes:—

Abbotsford: July 31, 1829.

Most astonished friends! O most amazed readers!

Under us the great man is snoring, his dogs are asleep and his armoured knights awake: it is twelve o'clock, and the sweetest ghostly hour which I have ever spent, for Miss Scott makes the most delicious marmalade—the trees of the park are rustling, the waves of the Tweed whisper to the bard the tales of long bygone days, and the mystery of the present; and harp-strains, sounded by tender hands, mingle therewith, vibrat-

ing through the strange old-fashioned apartment in which our celebrated host has quartered us. Never was a letter begun with greater relish, and we look down very much on Europe. When this morning at a quarter to six we drove out of Edinburgh, still quite sleepy, strange sounds fell on our ears: the stage was already in motion, I rushed on to catch it, a street-porter (here of course a Highlander) stopped it and called out eagerly, 'Run, my man, run, my man; it won't wait!' What signify another forty miles, if then we discover the sources of the Nile? We were in Melrose: Felix drove to Abbotsford; I stayed behind, as a person without a letter of introduction, who might follow if Sir Walter would positively not let the other go. Melrose Abbey is a ruin full of preservation and conversation; King David (of Scotland) and the magician Scott (Michael, not Walter) are there cut in stone, and the whole neighbourhood is interwoven with legends and ancient fairy dances. Thomas the Rhymer and the Fairy Queen held their revels a little higher up in the dark glen, and something of that still animates the castellan when he scrambles like a chamois up to the highest point of the ruins. One gets so hungry in such ruins (which by way of contrast throw the present in one's very face) that I retired into the inn for bread and cheese and ale and a newspaper. So I lay in quiet enjoyment on the sofa, when the coach came back and some one rushed into our room. Thinking only of Felix, I made some scurrilous remark. That moment I discerned an elderly man: 'Oh, Sir Walter!' cried I, jumping up; and with apologizing blushes I added, 'Familiar likenesses can alone excuse like familiarity!' 'Never mind!' was his brief reply,—his who is so famed for prolixity! 'My dear future Parnassus-brother and historical novelist, I have much pleasure in meeting you. Your friend has already beautifully told me what and how much you will yet write and may have written.' Meanwhile hands were shaken out of joint and shaken in again, and we all proceeded in happy ecstasy to Abbotsford. This very evening Felix and I tremblingly wrote music and verses in a large album. I wrote the following:—

Hohe Berge steigen himmelaufwärts
Und die Moore liegen rabenschwarz dazwischen,

Felsen, Schluchten, Schlösser, Trümmer reden von
uralter Vergangenheit,
Und sinnverwirrend umrauscht es die Neuen,
Die davon träumen, ohne es zu verstehn.—
Aber an den Pforten des Landes wohnt Einer,
Der, ein Weiser, der Räthsel kundig ist
Und der alles Alte neu an's Licht bringt—
Nun ziehen die Frohen
Und rauschen und lauschen
Und reisen und weisen
Verstehen und sehen
Die Felsen und Schluchten und Schlösser und Trümmer.—
Der Weise aber hebet noch immer die Schätze
Und münzt sie ein in goldne, klingende Batzen!
Dies zum Andenken von etc. etc.[1]

P.S. by Felix.—This is all Klingemann's invention. We found Sir Walter in the act of leaving Abbotsford, stared at him like fools, drove eighty miles and lost a day for the sake of at best one half-hour of superficial conversation. Melrose compensated us but little: we were out of humour with great men, with ourselves, with the world, with everything. It was a bad day. To-day, however, was glorious! We have forgotten the ills of yesterday, and can laugh over them.

Felix.—

Blair Athol: August 3, 1829.

This is a most dismal, melancholy, rainy day. But we make shift as best we can, which indeed is not saying much.

Lofty mountains rising to the skies,
Raven-black moors far between expanding,
Rocks, crevices, castles, ruins, speak of the primæval past,
In magic rustle sweeping by the living,
Who dream of it, but cannot understand it.
But at the gates of that old land there lives one,
A sage, who has the knowledge of those riddles,
And brings to fresh new light the wan old darkness.
Now come all the gay,
And listen and stay,
And travel and revel,
Delight in the sight,
Of the rocks and the crevices, castles and ruins,
But the sage evermore he digs up hidden treasures,
Coining silver and gold, preading wondrous fair pleasures.
(This in remembrance of, etc.)

Earth and sky are wet through, and whole regiments of clouds are still marching up. Yesterday was a lovely day, we passed from rock to rock, many waterfalls, beautiful valleys, with rivers, dark woods and heath with the red heather in blossom. In the morning we drove in an open carriage, and then walked twenty-one (English) miles. I sketched a great deal, and Klingemann hit upon the divine idea, which I am sure will give you great pleasure, of writing some rhymes at every spot of which I make a sketch. Yesterday and to-day we have been carrying out the plan, which answers charmingly: he has already composed very pretty things.

Evening, August 3: Bridge of Tummel.

A wild affair! The storm howls, rushes, and whistles, doors are banging and window-shutters are bursting open. Whether the watery noise is from the driving rain or the foaming stream there's no telling, as both rage together; we are sitting here quietly by the fire, which I poke from time to time to make it flare up. The room is large and empty, from one of the walls the wet trickles down, the floor is so thin that the conversation from the servants' room below penetrates up to us: they are singing drunken songs and laughing; dogs are barking. We have two beds with crimson curtains; on our feet, instead of English slippers, are Scotch wooden shoes; tea, with honey and potato-cakes; there is a wooden winding staircase, on which the servant-girl came to meet us with whisky, a desperate cloud-procession in the sky, and in spite of servants' noise and door-banging there is repose. It is quiet and very lonely here! I might say that the stillness rings through the noise. Just now the door opens of itself. This is a Highland inn. The little boys with their kilts and bare knees and gay-coloured bonnets, the waiter in his tartan, old people with pigtails, talk helter-skelter in their unintelligible Gaelic. The country is far and wide thickly overgrown with foliage, from all sides ample water is rushing from under the bridges, there is little corn, much heather brown and red, precipices, passes, crossways, beautiful green everywhere, deep-blue water—but all stern, dark, very lonely. But why describe it? Ask Droysen, he knows it better, and can paint it: we have been constantly repeating lines from

his 'Hochlands' to each other. Dear Droysen, how is it that you know Scotland? It is just as you describe it.

This evening I am reading the 'Flegeljahre,' and my sisters are looking at me wistfully.[1] Hensel understands his business: he knows how to see faces and how to fix them. But the weather is discouraging.

I have invented a new manner of drawing on purpose for it, and have rubbed in clouds to-day and painted gray mountains with my pencil. Klingemann is rhyming briskly, and I finish my sketches during the rain.

Klingemann.—

Given in the Hebrides: August 7, 1829.

The youngsters of Tobermory, the capital of the Isle of Mull, are merrily bustling by the harbour; the Atlantic Ocean, which appears to contain abundance of water, is quietly riding at anchor, the same as our steamer; we have found quarters in a respectable private house, and would williugly leave a memorial of our day's work in always issuing, like Napoleon, our army-bulletins from places of note. Perfectly charming it is here! From my earliest days I have confounded the Hebrides with the Hesperides; and if we did not find the oranges on the trees, they lay at least in the whisky-toddy. Yesterday we moved up-hill and down-hill, our cart generally rolling on by the side, and we ourselves stalking onwards through heather and moors and all kinds of passes[2] (nature here is so amply provided with them that Government does not ask for any), under clouds, and in a thick drizzling rain, through the Highlands. Smoky huts were stuck on cliffs, ugly women looked through the window-holes, cattle-herds with Rob Roys now and then blocked up the way, mighty mountains were sticking up to their knees (the latter in Highland costume) in the clouds, and looked out again from the top, but we often saw little. Late last night we unexpectedly stumbled upon a bit of culture again, viz. the one street of which Fort William consists, and this morning we embraced the very newest piece of culture,

[1] Felix's sisters had sent him to England Jean Paul's *Flegeljahre*, his favourite book, in which Hensel had drawn their portraits as a frontispiece.

[2] 'Pass' is the German word for passport.

steam, and were again among many people, greedily enjoying sunshine and sea-green, the wide outlines of the sea, the rocks at modest distance, good cheer, and society of all kind. A new friend told us at once that yonder young couple were on their honeymoon excursion, and that he had seen them on Ben Lomond shortly after the wedding dance a Scotch reel, the bride with parting tears in her eyes. By the harbour of Oban Bruce's Rock rises up, where he is said to have done some great deed or other; the Laird MacDonald goes home with his ladies to a new house, which stands behind the ruins of the old castle, and where a silver brooch of Bruce's is still kept; our Edinburgh friend, Captain Nelson of the Navy, with whom we met on the ship and shook hands with, tells us wonderful stories of how this relic had once been lost and bought again at a high price, and that once it was stolen along with other things, and at last found in possession of a lady-descendant of Rob Roy.

Glasgow: August 10, 1829.

Seas have again been crossed since I wrote last. On the seventh day we had to take rest, so as to be ready to put to sea again next morning at five o'clock. Sitting, as we are now, in the best hotel of a commercial town of 160,000 inhabitants, which has a university and cotton manufactories, and coffee and sugar at first hand, we look back with equanimity on past disasters: the Highlands, however, and the sea brew nothing but whisky and bad weather. Here it is different and smooth, but comfortable. With a blue sky overhead, and a good sofa underneath, palatable victuals before and ministering spirits around us, we brave all dangers, particularly the past ones. On the said early morning, the agreeable steam-persons, who at first came flying towards us with nothing but olive-leaves, became lower and lower, the more the barometer sank and the sea rose. For that the Atlantic did, it stretched its thousand feelers more and more roughly, twirling us about like anything. The ship-household kept its breakfast almost for itself, few people on board being able to manage their cups and saucers, ladies as a rule fell down like flies, and one or the other gentleman followed their example; I only wish my travelling

fellow-sufferer had not been among them, but he is on better terms with the sea as a musician than as an individual or a stomach; two beautiful cold daughters of a Hebrides aristocrat, at whom Felix may storm, quietly continued sitting on deck, and did not even care much for the sea-sickness of their own mother. Also there sat placidly by the steam-engine, warming herself in the cold wind, a woman of two-and-eighty. That woman has six times touched me and seven times irritated me. She wanted to see Staffa before her end. Staffa, with its strange basalt pillars and caverns, is in all picture-books. We were put out in boats and lifted by the hissing sea up the pillar stumps to the celebrated Fingal's Cave. A greener roar of waves surely never rushed into a stranger cavern—its many pillars making it look like the inside of an immense organ, black and resounding, and absolutely without purpose, and quite alone, the wide gray sea within and without. There the old woman scrambled about laboriously, close to the water: she wanted to see the cave of Staffa before her end, and she saw it. We returned in the little boat to our steamer, to that unpleasant steam-smell. When the second boat arrived, I could see with what truth at the theatre they represent the rising and falling of a boat, when the hero saves the heroine out of some trouble. There was a certain comfort in seeing that the two aristocratic faces had after all turned pale, as I looked at them through my black eye-glass. The two-and-eighty-years-old woman was also in the boat trembling, the boat went up and down, with difficulty she was lifted out—but she had seen Staffa before her end. The pleasure increased in gravity; where yesterday nice conversation went on, to-day silence was indulged in. That glossy negro, yesterday on deck, who (when he did not smoke) played on tambourine and pipe the Huntsmen's Chorus on the Atlantic, and who in the evening had all the juveniles of Tobermory in his train, had remained there. The yellow mulatto cook, whose shining Caliban-countenance we joyfully watched yesterday amongst saucepans, herrings, and vegetables, was now frying some stale ham, the smell of which drove some suffering navigators to despair, if not to worse; the surviving passengers conspired against the captain, who, to oblige Sir James, was going to sail

back by the roundabout way, instead of taking the short cut by Iona to Oban. Iona, one of the Hebrides-sisters—there is truly a very Ossianic and sweetly sad sound about that name—when in some future time I shall sit in a madly crowded assembly with music and dancing round me, and the wish arises to retire into the loneliest loneliness, I shall think of Iona, with its ruins of a once magnificent cathedral, the remains of a convent, the graves of ancient Scotch kings and still more ancient northern pirate-princes—with their ships rudely carved on many a monumental stone. If I had my home on Iona, and lived there upon melancholy as other people do on their rents, my darkest moment would be when in that wide space, that deals in nothing but cliffs and sea-gulls, suddenly a curl of steam should appear, followed by a ship and finally by a gay party in veils and frock-coats, who would look for an hour at the ruins and graves and the three little huts for the living, and then move off again. This highly unjustifiable joke, occurring twice a week, and being almost the only thing to make one aware that there are such things as time and clocks in the world, would be as if the inhabitants of those old graves haunted the place in a ludicrous disguise. Opposite Iona stands a rocky island, which, to complete the effect, looks like a ruined city.

Gradually the sea-sick people recovered, a sail was spread, by way of tent, on deck, less for keeping off the sun than the wet, which is a constant matter of dispute between Felix and me, since he calls it rain, and I call it mist; we kept open table in the face of all the sea-monsters of the Atlantic; even Felix fell to and stood out like his own self; Sir James took wine with those that had not complained of him—we refraining from that honour. At seven o'clock in the evening we ought to have been back in Oban, our continent, but we only reached Tobermory; some of the party went on shore, the negro did not entice the insular juveniles, for it rained, and he would not have found favour. Night came on, the captain coolly cast anchor in some corner or other, and we lay down in the cabin; beds there were none, and herrings are lodged in spacious halls compared to us. At times when half asleep I tried to drive away flies from my face, and then found they were the grizzly locks

of the old Scotchman; if the Pope had been amongst us, some Protestant might unawares have kissed his slipper, for we often chanced to make unknown boots act as pillows. It was a wild night's revel without the merry cup, and with rain and wind for the boisterous songsters.

At half past six on Sunday morning we landed at Oban in the rain. Not wishing to hear a Gaelic sermon, we mounted one of those eligible open vehicles that are called carts, 'sheltered' by the rain; at last, however, the sun came out, warming our hearts and drying our cloaks. In Inverary we found an excellent inn and good quarters. Our host's beautiful daughter in her black curls looked out like a sign over the signboard into the harbour, in which the newest herrings are swimming about all alive at nine o'clock in the morning, and at a quarter past nine are served up fried with the coffee. Sympathising fellow-travellers eased our minds of our past sufferings and our feet of our torn boots. The Duke of Argyll's castle proudly looked forth from between the lofty trees; and from the tops of the surrounding hills the green trees held a colloquy with their relations below, who were already appointed to the navy and swam about in the water.

Our longing for culture and letters drove us to Glasgow by a wondrous road through divers 'lochs' (*i.e.* lakes) and some land. Out of a steamboat on which we embarked, whilst our host's black-curled daughter thumped the piano, we were to have been transferred into a steam-coach, but our locomotion was effected by horses, and the former vehicle stood idly by the road-side, having already been used but not found quite practicable yet, and looking very ridiculous with a high funnel and a rudder. Then we were again lodged in a steamboat, which was said to be of iron: the walls, however, at which we knocked were of wood. Then again we drove a little distance on land, until we came to Loch Hech, there once more got on board a steamer, which finally delivered us to a final one in the mouth of the Clyde, and we sailed up the Clyde to Glasgow: a splendid sail, scarcely any waves, watering-places on the river with large vessels, sea-gulls, steamers fast gliding past, villas, a rock with Dumbarton Castle and a view of the clear wide distance, and the blue towering, magnificent Ben Lomond. We saw him for the first time. The

country became more flat, and soft corn-fields gave us a familiar greeting like old acquaintances, after our long roaming along the proud and silent mountains. Everything was still and peaceful. Three kinds of stillnesses are here: between the mountains the water rushes, but it is sternly still; in the sea between the islands the waves roll, but it is dismally still; in the smooth water the steamboats fly, but it is mildly and recreatively still. The first are wild fellows, who refuse learning and working; the second are discharged gods, who are sulking; the last are good children after a good day's work. In Glasgow there are seventy steamboats, forty of which start every day, and many long chimneys are smoking. An excellent inn refreshes us; the waiters minister to us with two hands and as many feet, as steam-service in hotels has not yet been invented.

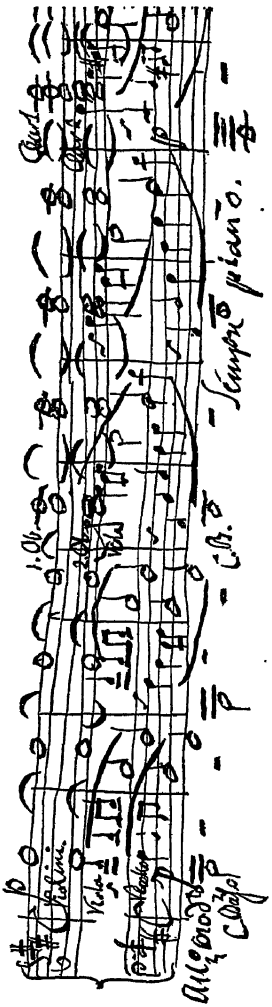
On the 11th, to-morrow, we start for Loch Lomond and the rest of the scenery which ought to be published and packed up as supplements to Sir Walter Scott's complete works. We have seen and admired Glasgow. This morning we were in a stupendous cotton mill, as full of maddening noise as the divine waterfall of Monass. What is the difference to the ear? One old work-woman wore a wreath of cotton, another had tied up her aching tooth with it. Hundreds of little girls toil there from their earliest days and look yellow. But there will ever exist poetry about it. Systematic order becomes sublime, and the whole swallows itself up in succession, like seasons and vegetation. I joke little and admire much. Times are not so bad, when everything irresistibly moves on, and motion is the best digestive. Time goes on at an alarming pace, and all the Highlands, broad and narrow, have yet to be described. We are too far before-hand, the best ingredients for thoughts and letters, and even better than the best, have necessarily been left behind in divers corners and nooks, and the Highlanders cannot appreciate them, whilst *you*, all of you, deserve our best and not our hastiest.

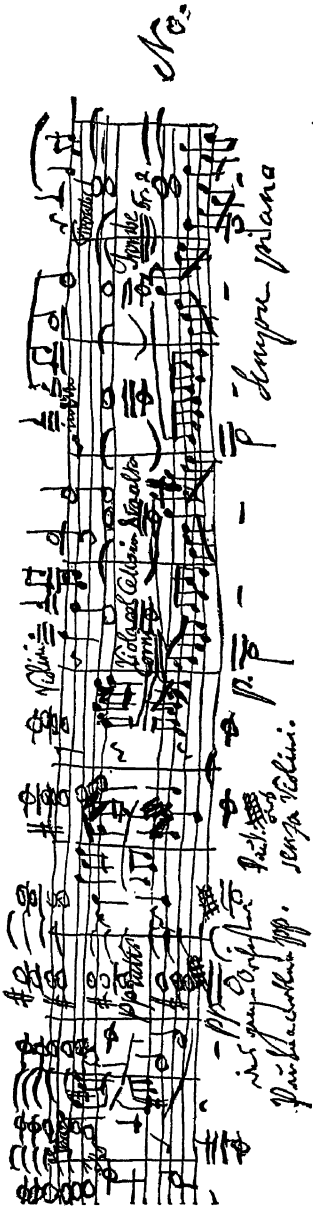
KLINGEMANN.

Felix.—

On one of the Hebrides: August 7, 1829.

In order to make you understand how extraordinarily the Hebrides affected me, the following came into my mind there.





Glasgow: August 11.

How much lies betwixt my last letter and this! The most fearful sickness, Staffa, scenery, travels, people—Klingemann has described it all, and you will excuse a short note, the more so as what I can best tell you is contained in the above music.

Felix.—

Glasgow: August 15.

This then is the end of our Highland journey and the last of our joint letters. We have been happy together, have led a merry life, and roved about the country as gaily as if the storm and rain, of which all newspapers (by this time perhaps even the Berlin ones) are full, had not existed. But they *did* exist. We had weather to make the trees and rocks crash. The day before yesterday on Loch Lomond we were sitting in deep twilight in a small rowing boat, and were going to cross to the opposite shore, invited by a gleaming light, when there came a sudden tremendous gust of wind from the mountain; the boat began to see-saw so fearfully that I caught up my cloak and got ready to swim. All our things were thrown topsy-turvy, and Klingemann anxiously called to me, 'Look sharp, look sharp!' But with our usual good luck we got safely through. When on shore, we had to sit in a room with a cursing young Englishman, who was something between a sportsman, a peasant, and a gentleman, perfectly insufferable, and with three other individuals of a similar kind, and were obliged to sleep in the next house close under the roof, so that from sitting-room to bedroom we walked with umbrellas, cloak, and cap. To describe the wretchedness and the comfortless, inhospitable solitude of the country, time and space do not allow; we wandered ten days without meeting a single traveller; what are marked on the map as towns, or at least villages, are a few sheds, huddled together, with one hole for door, window, and chimney, for the entrance and exit of men, beasts, light, and smoke, in which to all questions you get a dry 'No,' in which brandy is the only beverage known, without church, without street, without gardens, the rooms pitch dark in broad daylight, children and fowls lying

in the same straw, many huts without roofs, many unfinished, with crumbling walls, many ruins of burnt houses; and even these inhabited spots are but sparingly scattered over the country. Long before you arrive at a place you hear it talked of; the rest is heath, with red or brown heather, withered fir stumps, and white stones, or black moors where they shoot grouse. Now and then you find beautiful parks, but deserted, and broad lakes, but without boats, the roads a solitude. Fancy in all that the rich glowing sunshine, which paints the heath in a thousand divinely warm colours, and then the clouds chasing hither and thither! It is no wonder that the Highlands have been called melancholy. But two fellows have wandered merrily about them, laughed at every opportunity, rhymed and sketched together, growled at one another and at the world when they happened to be vexed or did not find anything to eat, devoured everything eatable when they did find it, and slept twelve hours every night; those two were we, who will not forget it as long as we live.

Klingemann.—

Glasgow: August 14, 1829.

My *vis-à-vis* has not only so completely done his page but also the Highlands that I feel ashamed to begin, and should be inclined to take a piece of oat-cake on the spot as a striking document and illustration. Ever-memorable country! The mnemonic powers of the nose are well known, and in the same way as Walt[1] could not forget auriculas, so the Highland smell will be remembered by us, a certain smoky atmosphere which every Highlander has about him. I once, while going along, closed my eyes and then correctly stated that five Highlanders had passed—my nose had seen them. It is easy to determine the number of houses in the same way. As for the rest, the country is not as bad as certain people in great capitals would make out. It is almost exclusively a mountainous country, and as such it is remarkable. At night, when the storm rises, you find an inn with beds and rooms which you are not exactly obliged to share with cattle drovers, but with sporting John

[1] Jean Paul's *Flegeljahre*.

Bulls; if a fowl chances to run about the room or a pig squeaks under you, it is a proof that you may look forward to a new-laid egg and some pork next morning at breakfast; if the cart on which you travel jolts rather murderously, that is only the more temptation to get out and walk; if no officious fellow happens to be found to carry one's things on foot, that is but a friendly invitation to make oneself comfortable and drive; if nothing is to be had but fresh herrings and beautiful rich cream, that indicates the patriarchal primitiveness which the modern world has so often on its lips; if the people make a clumsy effort at something better, with diluted wine and diluted bills, that shows a pleasing disposition for culture. Altogether the inns, so few and far between, which on the map are marked as towns, perhaps represent nothing further than seeds of cities, here and there dotted over the broad moor, which by-and-by will swell and grow.

At last we issued from the Highlands, longing for the warm sun, which we had not seen for days, lounging in good carriages long unknown to us, driving through level country and cheerful villages, such as we had not been in for ages. The sun did really shine out here from the blue sky, only over the Highlands black clouds were hanging; but the longer and oftener we looked back, the bluer and more misty grew the mountains, at the feet of which we had been lying, all deep shades of colour mingled, and we might have become Highland-sick and wished ourselves back had we not known that the reality within that mountain land was gray, cold, and majestic. It was a sweet farewell to the heights which we at once abuse and love.

Felix.—

August 19, 1829.

We flew away from Glasgow on the top of the mail, ten miles an hour, past steaming meadows and smoking chimneys, to the Cumberland lakes, to Keswick, Kendal, and the prettiest towns and villages. The whole country is like a drawing-room. The rocky walls are papered with bushes, moss, and firs, the trees are carefully wrapped up in ivy; there are no walls or fences, only high hedges, and you see them all the way up the

flat hilltops. On all sides carriages full of travellers fly along the roads; the corn stands in sheaves; slopes, hills, precipices, are all covered with thick, warm foliage. Then again our eyes dwelt on the dark blue English distance, many a noble castle, and so on, until we reached Ambleside. There the sky turned gloomy again, and we had rain and storm. Sitting on the top of the 'stage,' and madly careering along ravines, past lakes, uphill, downhill, wrapped in cloaks, and umbrellas up, we could see nothing but railings, heaps of stones or ditches, and but rarely catch glimpses of hills and lakes. Sometimes our umbrellas scraped against the roofs of the houses, and then, wet through, we would come to a second-rate inn, with a high blazing fire, and English conversation about walking, coals, supper, the weather, and Bonaparte. Yesterday our seats on the coach were accidentally separated, so that I hardly spoke to Klingemann, for changing horses was done in about forty seconds. I sat on the box next by the coachman, who asked me whether I flirted much, and made me talk a good deal, and taught me the slang of horsemanship. Klingemann sat next to two old women, with whom he shared his umbrella. Again manufactories, meadows, parks, provincial towns, here a canal, there a railway, then the sea with ships, six full coaches with towering outsiders following each other, in the evening a thick fog: the stage-coaches running madly in the darkness. Through the fog we see lamps gleaming all about the horizon, the smoke of manufactories envelops us on all sides, gentlemen on horseback ride past, one coach-horn blows in B flat, another in D, others follow in the distance, and here we are at Liverpool.

This evening Klingemann goes to London, and I to Holywell —the Scotch journey is over; everything goes very fast, much novelty has passed me lately, and has not yet come to a standstill. We part now, and a beautiful time must be numbered with the things that were.

Klingemann.—

Liverpool: August 19, half-past nine.

At ten o'clock our pleasure will be over. Two grave fellows have settled their accounts, and I shall settle myself on the

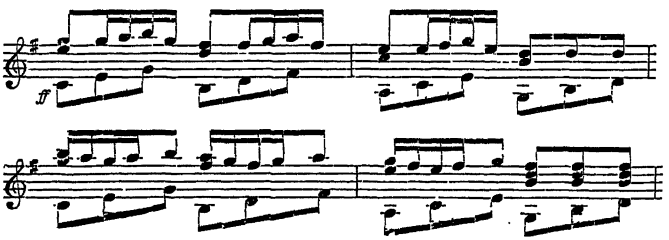
mail, and go on, not as I should like to do, with my letter, but with my journey to London. Here then follows a short warm leave-taking from my joint-correspondence companion and from all the green, mountainous scene. To-day in the little town of Liverpool we have necessarily loitered about the exchange, the harbour, the new cemeteries, and the town-hall, and in order to get our dinner had to go in a steamer across the raw, rainy Mersey, whence we have just returned, sitting in a dark cabin amongst invisible, silent, and talkative, rather full and yet empty Liverpudlians, and now, packing and reckoning, end our four weeks' wet but good holiday. May the bells go on ringing and pealing until wayward fate again takes a fancy to separate people God knows how, and unite them God knows where. By a strange roundabout way two fellows, who in more than one sense are opposite one another, are writing about each other in a mutual letter, and say, God bless you, and many thanks for your good company! We did indeed bravely and honestly wend our way through Highlands and Lowlands, but woe upon all the bad inns and all the mountain rain, that have so often made us silent! Basta! Felix envies me the miserable bit of space still left on this paper, as it gives *me* the privilege of setting forth a piquant event of this morning, viz. that we found on board the New York steamer *Napoleon*, among all other imaginable mahogany comforts, a Broadwood piano, to while away the long moments on the sea, at which—in the Liverpool harbour, close to the Atlantic—Felix sat down and played to me, O bridal young lady! the first movement of your Easter-sonata, of which till then we had only talked. The cool sea air wafted in from above, and distant sailors sang at their work a monotonous ditty in a minor key. Farewell!

Felix.—

Llangollen: August 25, 1829.

No national music for me! Ten thousand devils take all nationality! Now I am in Wales, and, dear me! a harper sits in the hall of every reputed inn, playing incessantly so-called national melodies; that is to say, most infamous, vulgar, out-of-tune trash, with a hurdy-gurdy going *at the same time*! It is

distracting, and has given me a toothache already. Scotch bagpipes, Swiss cow-horns, Welsh harps, all playing the Huntsmen's Chorus with hideously improvised variations—then their beautiful singing in the hall—altogether their music is beyond conception. Any one who, like myself, cannot bear Beethoven's national songs, should come here and listen to them bellowed out by rough nasal voices, and accompanied in the most awkward style, and keep his temper. Whilst I am writing this, the fellow in the hall is playing



and then he varies it, and the hurdy-gurdy puts in a hymn in E flat. I am getting mad, and must leave off writing till by-and-by.

August 26.—I did right. In my despair last night I went to mine host's three daughters, who possess a piano, and requested them to play to me. They are pretty girls, and they played. Hurdy-gurdy man and harp-player (the latter, I saw this morning, officiates also as barber) were silenced; the daughter drummed away, and I was happy. 'Masaniello' and some quadrilles refreshed me. Then they asked me to 'favour them'; and I favoured them to my heart's content, playing furiously, and curing my toothache. It was quite a pleasant evening, and I returned to my room too late to write. Moreover, I had been scrambling yesterday up a high mountain, with a ruined convent on the summit. From there I looked round into the blue distance and into dark lonely valleys at the mountain's foot, walked down to one of those still vales, with the walls and windows of an ancient abbey, covered and filled up with tender green trees; a noisy brook rushes by, stones and rocky fragments are scattered all about. The choir of the church has been turned into a stable, the altar is a kitchen; the fretted

window-arches are overgrown by the tops of the beeches that stand in the nave. The sky was a monotonous gray. I composed some music, instead of drawing in Hensel's Christmas book. It was a good day.

Blue sky and sunshine benefit my very heart, they are so indispensable to me! Here they are not, and that makes me feel grave and almost sad. Summer is gone, and we have not had one summer's day. Yesterday was a good day, that is to say, I got wet only three times, kept my cloak round my shoulders, and several times saw the sun through the clouds. Of *bad* days you have no conception. A furiously driving storm has been blowing almost without interruption for four weeks, the clouds are lowering, and would rain fearfully if the storm allowed them to fall quietly to the ground; but it intercepts them, throws them about in the air, or lashes them into your face in the shape of drizzle: the only thing you can do is to remain at home. Instead of the customary merry travelling talk you hear 'Time out of mind,' or 'Roads flooded,' or 'Mails and ships missing,' 'Travelling-plan spoilt.' Mine is by this time spoilt likewise. To-day I was going to make a last attempt for the hills, in case of a blue sky, but there is the same rain-storm or storm-rain, and I give it up. The trip to Ireland went to pieces in Bangor and on the Isle of Anglesey. In spite of all the wet I kept thinking that I would go over for a few days; then the steamers arrived had been fifteen hours at sea instead of six, and when the sea-sick passengers came tottering on there, wet, weak, and swearing, I at once engaged a seat in the coach. I have fought a good fight against the weather, getting wet through almost daily. I have seen the hills, as one sees furniture, chandeliers, and carpets of an old palace, covered up with brown holland, except a few glorious hilltops. But now there is an end of it. To-morrow I shall go to my country friends, and next week back to London.

Two bright happy days fell like sunshine into the gloom, and it is strange that everything turns out so differently from what we fancy it will be. Those two days chanced to be the very first of my being quite alone, a stranger in a strange country. The evening of my last letter, when Klingemann had

packed up his things and got ready, I accompanied him in the dark through the raging storm and rain to the coach-office. He mounted the coach, we exchanged a few more German words, then the guard blew his horrid trumpet, the stage rattled off, London appeared to me as much a home as if it were my native town, and then I returned alone through the rain to the empty place and went to sleep in a room with two beds. How difficult everything had been but an hour ago! Imagine the most miserable evening possible, and you will not approach the reality. Bad accommodation, exorbitant bills, my drawing a failure, and such like vexations added to my discomfort. On the following day I did not start till two, and just for something to do I went to the railway (the line to Manchester is five-and-thirty miles), saw the two tunnels, and strolled inside. Not being able to see the end of the large tunnel, its extent made some impression on me. I spoke to the inspector, and by representations and entreaties prevailed upon him to allow me to go in a truck under Liverpool to the harbour. The truck came, a workman mounted behind, and off we went. The speed was fifteen miles an hour; there is no horse, no engine, the carriage goes of its own accord, getting gradually quicker and quicker owing to the road going almost imperceptibly downhill. We had two lights in front, but the daylight vanished, the draught extinguished the lights, and we were in utter darkness. For the first time in my life I saw *Nothing*. The truck tears on faster and faster, and rattles worse and worse—a trial to my nerves! In the middle of the passage we passed a coal-fire, and the workman stopped and lighted a lamp: it was bitter cold. At last the red warm daylight streamed in at the further end, and when I alighted I stood by the harbour. I felt much relieved, and when on my way home I went through the market-house the sight of it quite cheered me up. It is only a slight framed house, though a good deal bigger than the catholic church, with a very low roof. All along the whole extent of the building there were about eight rows of stalls, piled up with fruit, meat, vegetables, cakes, and so arranged that a long broad avenue leads you through nothing but food. It swarms with all sorts of people, many negroes, Americans, Italians, many Welsh,

naval officers, innumerable handsome cooks. In the centre there is a large clock; the walls are decorated with plans of Liverpool. My spirits rose, and I drove to Chester. On the way I revolved in my mind a thing which has been troubling me for the last four weeks, whether I am doing right in spending so much money and time in roving about at random, without any definite purpose, only for pleasure. But then I said to myself that what I now see I may never see again, that I am seeing England free from care, and without any business, and that such independence may not fall to my lot a second time; for when I return I shall have too much to do to allow of country rambles. So, as I shall very likely never spend another summer here, as I can never forget Scotland, as I shall never call any time *lost* in which I was happy and bright (in which I never could be in idleness), and, last not least, as new ideas forming in my head are proofs that I have digested my London impressions, and must write music again (of which I had begun to despair), I cast aside all scruples and absolve myself. The question is, Will you, dear father, likewise do so? Well, I turned quite merry, and in Chester a bright scene presented itself: the broad town-walls make a promenade round the town, and there I saw a girls' school marching along which I followed with my sketch-book. The girls looked very pretty, the distance very blue, the houses and towers in the foreground dark gray; in the evening a gentle rain fell, and when it was dark we left for Holywell. My neighbour in the coach spoke much of a son of his lately dead, and invited me to come and see him. I accepted, although he does not know my name. Dark masses on both sides of the road promised ravines, trees, and hills; meanwhile I went to bed, after having enjoined on the boy to call at the post-office to-morrow morning as early as possible. He awakened me with letters, to which I owed the happiest day. One I received from dear Droysen, to whom you must read my pleasure and thanks. And then yours, full of life and Mühlenfels! The idea that father might perhaps come to London made me almost mad with joy. Dear father, if you only would come! Klingemann and I have so often talked about it. You say you require excitement; good-

ness knows this would be excitement! I won't say anything more about it, or I shall forget everything else. But if it only could come to pass! The thoughts of it, and your letters, altogether made me feel so happy and at home in my solitude! I drove out to the Taylors', to announce myself for the day after to-morrow. They live in their country-house, which stands on a large, closely mown lawn, surrounded with flowers; no bustle, noise, or people. Mr. Taylor's mines are some distance off; mountains all about. I walked across the meadows, and found the elegant and formal London family; but oh, how changed! The father and brother were away. Never mind! Two daughters were at work in the garden, the mother was riding on a donkey. There was much hand-shaking. I missed the prettiest daughter, but on our walk by-and-by we heard the sound of horses' feet, and immediately afterwards she came riding towards us, out of breath, in a blue habit, and followed by a tall cousin. She is very pretty, and her name is Susan. I began at once to hate the cousin, until it turned out that he would have much pleasure in accompanying me through Wales. I accepted, we struck up an eternal friendship (but in English, for he does not understand French, far less German), and our plans were soon settled. After this I was introduced to a good English grand-piano, and played to myself a variety of things. Upon that the above-named horsewoman promised me her own summer-house (a fir-bark cottage in the park) to compose in on my return; and I had to promise her to sketch the said cottage. At dinner the girls came in white dresses, my decided predilection (this may refer to the girls or the dresses); after dinner, in the twilight by the light of the fire, I played to them again, and then drove back in the dark to Holywell, sleeping of course in the carriage, but enjoying pleasant dreams. Those were the two sunny days. Next morning the rain and storm came back again; however, the Englishman and myself set out on our journey, and slept that night by the sea, at Bangor. (Wales is a beautiful country, but the paper is coming to an end, so that I must keep it for a *viva voce* description.) Next day we went by way of Carnarvon to Beddgellert and the vale of Festiniog, then to Capel Carrig, and yesterday to Corwen; whence my

companion returned to their house (Coed Du), and I came here. We got on very well together, and talked a good deal; but once on the 'stage,' when I was humming Fanny's first song, 'Hören möcht ich,' he pulled my sleeve and showed me a salmon fishery, where the finest salmon are caught. If he had not done that, I should never have snubbed him or growled at him. But those songs are more beautiful than any one can say. Indeed I speak as a cool critic, and declare them *very* pretty. There is music which seems the quintessence, the soul, of music. Such are your songs; I know no better! But farewell! Where I go to-day, east, west, or north, is not settled yet. Perhaps I shall stop here, for it rains tremendous. This however, I think, will be my last travelling letter: the next will be dated from London, that smoky nest. When I think of what I am doing, I quote father, and say to myself, 'Donde diavolo.' Take this letter in the spirit I write it, and God bless you! It is a strange coincidence that the day on which you wrote your letter, when you had sunshine in the garden and wished me the same, proved to be one of the few fine days here. Good morning to you all! FELIX.

September 2, 1829.

I address this letter to my sisters, for several reasons. It is the turning-point letter for this year; henceforward every one will be dated nearer and nearer to Berlin, until they stop altogether: that is one reason. There's nothing important, grave, or business-like to be told; nothing to write about but gardens, drawing, and flirting: that is another reason. And for the first time since I left Germany I am in a cordial, comfortable family circle, and while I enjoy it I think of you: that's my principal reason. We talk an immense deal about my sisters; my friends here have taken an immense fancy to your portraits, and know you well by your Christian names and everything, and I describe you exactly to them. All this I might have told you in my *London* letter, for I shall be there by the end of the week; but as I do not know what time and spirits I shall have left on my arrival there, and whether I shall then be able to write as cheerfully as I can now, it will be better to send a letter from here,

although it must be a few days longer on the road; for here I am in Coed Du, the country-house in Wales. On the day of my last letter from Llangollen, I drove along in the mail through fearful rain; walked down to the vale of Llanrwst, and drove in an open carriage to Conway, where I arrived perhaps wetter than I had ever in my life been before. On the following day I drove to Holywell, where I expected letters from you, and did not find any. I was wetter even than the day before. This time I had a bad room, my head felt dizzy from the storm, I was disappointed of home news, which always gives me a whole day's sustenance, had a smoky chimney, and found my inn just as comfortless and dreary as it had been cosy the first time. Altogether I hate and dread all second times, and therefore was trembling at the thought of going back to Coed Du. Moreover, I had nothing to read, as the first part of 'Guy Mannering,' which I had bought in the new five-shilling edition, was at an end, and the second is to come out only to-day. I therefore took up the paper and read of the Irish steamer which the captain had given up for lost, which had no coals left, which instead of twenty-six hours took fifty-six, in which the passengers lay on the floor, the stewards had to crawl on hands and feet, and the ladies were in continual fainting-fits, and which was only saved by the stopping of the wind. Then I read of two persons being tried who, in spite of all denials and many improbabilities, were sentenced and executed in three days; and more such ugly things. The following day, however, was the day for Coed Du. And now I wish I had the gift of description. But how am I to set about it when each step, each moment, is so entirely different from Germany? What shall I tell you?

I wish I were a famous author, that would be the thing for me. However, I write away; for you children it must be good enough. They speak the most correct English possible, and I sometimes make strange blunders; but that matters little. The father, Mr. Taylor, is the most English Englishman you can imagine. (*A propos*, I do not know Hamilton and Co., have never seen them, and only recommend them for a ticket for the Singakademie.) He possesses very extensive mines in different parts of England, and appears to be a great authority on the

matter; here he has six lead-mines, which he manages with his sons. The sons have been in Germany, and speak German to me; they are mighty sportsmen (Dick shot fifteen partridges and a pheasant yesterday); they run across the meadow in front of the house, go fishing, train their dogs, and make fun with their sisters. The latter have their own merits; perhaps only the second may be called handsome, but she is *very* handsome, and has a charming way of talking; all three look very nice, and the eldest is a capital girl: nor can anything be said against the youngest. Luckily the second is the chief piano-player, and I have already given her much good advice, how to keep the joints loose and how to hold her fingers. But the eldest is very clever at sketching, and can do men and women in the foreground very well. As I cannot do that, she puts the figures into some of my Scotch landscapes; yesterday, for instance, she put in some exquisite Highlanders. The youngest has just given me a little pin-cushion. The mother is very placid and good; one feels that she is the ruling spirit, although she talks little. I am very fond of her, and I think so she is of me: she sometimes reminds me of you, dear mother; even in the face the likeness at times is quite striking. Besides the family there are three long, withered, ugly, spiteful cousins from Ireland, unmarried, old, are always whispering and in short green dresses; we live in open feud, and hate each other cordially. Then their brother, a quiet, morose young man, who plays the horn and is a proficient in mining; then another cousin, my travelling companion, who kills many rabbits, draws, and makes love to the youngest; then a quiet captain of the navy; then three ponies and donkeys, a phaeton, a man-servant in plush and silk, gardeners, workpeople, etc. The scene is between Mold and Ruthin, Flintshire; time, twelve o'clock at noon. The visitors arrived yesterday, and are going to assist at the grand *fête*, which will begin in about an hour. In a narrow valley six miles from here a tent has been erected, where we are to dine to-day: the whole neighbourhood has been invited, will assemble here at one, and then walk to the tent. Wherever there is pretty scenery we shall make a stop and sketch all aspects and prospects. The mother will ride

on a donkey, for special guests the phaeton will be ready; the pheasant that was killed yesterday is under a brown pie-crust; the gardener has orders for a great many flowers; from my window I see white dresses fluttering in the meadow. If the weather is fine we shall laugh, if it rains we shall laugh still more; besides, there is a steam-engine in the neighbourhood, where we may warm ourselves, and take shelter in case of necessity. When we come home this evening, we shall find the saloon thrown open and illuminated, because there will be dancing. (The girls have told me so in confidence, therefore don't betray the secret!) This is an extempore holiday, for no special occasion whatever, merely for pleasure's sake; that pleases me immensely, and I defy any one to run down the English. In every respect I live splendidly here; above all, there is much music, I play three or four hours a day, and write music of different kinds—amongst others, something for the next wedding. That crazy song for the tragedian has been sent off, and you, Fanny, will see to the corrections. Then I have somewhat hastily promised Miss Anne to set to music the nosegay of carnations with a rose in the centre which she gave me the other day, and it is rather a hard task: I am to write it into her album, and make a drawing of the nosegay over it. It will be, as Seidel says, very tender. I shall soon send over my violin-quartet [in E flat]; and for the completion of my Reformation-symphony I was the other day at a depth of five hundred feet underground, perhaps not without a result. The Hebrides affair likewise may turn out fanciful enough, and for the silver wedding I am concocting all sorts of spirits. That much for my music *explicite*. *Implicite* my music is when we all sit together down by the sluice, sketching; Miss Anne and I do the sluice, Susan does her sister; Anne the youngest, with her back towards us, sketches the further course of the brook, the cousin the whole group; and the father comes from his mine over the bridge, smiling very pleasantly and chatting with us, as we go on with our occupation. In the evening, when we have had enough piano-playing, the sketches are brought out again and touched up. Anne finishes hers very well, and manages

light and shade; I go on a broad scale; Susan's figures are put into our landscapes, she makes use of our trees for her background, and so forth. *Implicite* it is music too when we ride out together, for the girls do not look amiss in their blue riding-habits. The other day I rode out with the brother John and the eldest sister to pay a visit to two old ladies in the neighbourhood, and yesterday I rode with the cousin and Susan far over the country more than twelve miles. After we had been riding briskly and I had been talking of my German life, we slackened our pace and kept on conversing, and the quiet English girl began of a sudden to talk of you, Rebecca, and to tell me how she means to teach you riding when you come to Coed Du (your coming is to the girls an indubitable fact), and that you will ride much better than Fanny (I almost think so too), and which rooms you shall have. *Implicite* likewise it is music at dinner when we talk over and over again of a dear friend of the family who is now in Mexico, and whose name is Captain Lion (father will remember him from Ritter's lectures, the same who left the desert Sahara to go straight to the North Pole), and when Mr. Taylor tells us nice bits from Lion's travels, and the daughters bring out the American things he gave them, and the mother tries to describe to me the Esquimaux-songs he used to sing to them on summer evenings out of doors. All this is indeed music, and very charming too! Do you remember what a fancy for heliotropes I took once at Potsdam? I have the same fancy here for a kind of large carnation (I shall bring seeds of it), and every morning the girls give me the most lovely ones: my room smells so sweetly. On Sundays I do not play, because I saw that they do not like it, and in the evening have to play to them some sacred music, Handel and so on; and that is twofold music. To-morrow there is to be a public dinner at Holywell, given in honour of Mr. Taylor by the people of the neighbourhood, at which I am to be present as a friend of the family—I think I may call myself so—and the day after to-morrow I shall go back to London. There I shall settle many affairs, thank all my friends and well-wishers, write to Moscheles, Johnston, etc., finish my drawings, cross the Channel, etc. I am writing this close to the steam-

engine which I mentioned, for in the middle of my letter I was called away and walked down with the ladies into the valley, where the tent is. What follows I must live to see, and then I will write to you about it.—Yours,

FELIX.

London: September 10, 1829.

. . . My stay at the Taylors' was one of those times of which I shall never lose the flowery memory, and I shall always recollect the meadows and woods, the brook with its pebbles and rustling sound; we have become friends, I think, and I am truly fond of the girls, and believe that they like me too, for we were very happy together. I owe them three of my best piano-compositions. When the two younger sisters saw that I took the carnations and rose in earnest, and began to write music (of course in Susan's summer-house), the youngest came up with little yellow open bells in her hair, assuring me they were trumpets, and asking me whether I could not introduce them into the orchestra, as I had talked the other day of wanting new instruments; and when in the evening we danced to the miners' music and the trumpets were rather shrill, she gave it as her opinion that her trumpets would do better to dance to, so I wrote a dance for her—but the yellow flower-bells supplied the music. And for the other sister I composed 'The Rivulet,' which had pleased us so much during our ride that we dismounted and sat down by it (I think I wrote about it to you). The last piece I believe is the best I have done in that way: it is so flowing and quiet, and drowsily simple, that I have played it to myself every day, and have got quite sentimental over it. I would send you the pieces, but as I hope to have my quartet finished by next post-day, and intend sending it you, and must bring home something new in December, I shall keep back my five pieces—not 'lions,' as Rebecca calls them, but 'darlings' of mine. One of them I have not even got in manuscript. Yes, children, you may be scandalised, I do nothing but flirt, and that in English! But seriously, it was a happy time, and passed very quickly. I drove away in the evening; the lights in the house sparkled through the bushes in the

distance; in my open carriage I passed by several favourite places, the gentle brook already mentioned, the last hedge of the property, and then off I went at furious English speed. I snubbed all my travelling companions, spoke not a word, but kept quiet, half dreaming, half thinking, a little gloomy, just as I think one always is when one goes along two hundred miles in a mail. It appeared almost like a magic-lantern of chance when on the second evening of my journey (I travelled right through, in order to reach London in the morning) the mail stopped, because it met the mail from London to Chester, and, putting my head out of the window while the two coachmen were talking, I saw peeping out of the other mail Fr. Cramer and his daughter (you remember Miss Marian?). Exchange a few words, then drive asunder, and part for years or longer—such is the world; moving onwards, meeting, coming near, and going far away. On my arrival in London I resumed my quiet life, which consists in writing music and reading English. My quartet is now in the middle of the last movement, and I think will be completed in a few days; so will be the organ piece for the wedding. Then (D.V.) I shall begin my Reformation-symphony, the Scotch symphony, and Hebrides matter, all shaping themselves gradually. Vocal music too moves in my head, but I shall take good care not to say what kind and how. The Clementis sent me back on the day of my arrival the same beautiful piano I had during my former stay; and as I asked Mr. Collard to let me have it on hire this time, he sent me a few English verses and begged me to set them to music. This is hard for me, but I must.

The following letter,[1] written after his death by a member of the Taylor family, gives a very good idea of the impression Felix made on his hospitable friends at Coed Du.

It was in the year 1829 that we first became acquainted with Mr. Mendelssohn. He was introduced to us by my aunt

[1] Reprinted by permission from the *Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Macmillan & Co.), article 'Mendelssohn,' vol. ii. p. 264

Mrs. Austin, who had well known his cousin Professor Mendelssohn at Bonn. He visited us early in the season in Bedford Row, but our real friendship began at Coed Du, which was a house near Mold in Flintshire, rented for many years by my father, Mr. John Taylor.

Mr. Mendelssohn came down there to spend a little time with us, in the course of a tour in England and Scotland. My father and mother received him kindly, as they did everybody; but his arrival created no particular sensation, as many strangers came to our house to see the mines under my father's management, and foreigners were often welcomed there. Soon, however, we began to find that a most accomplished mind had come among us, quick to observe, delicate to distinguish. We knew little about his music, but the wonder of it grew upon us; and I remember one night, when my two sisters and I went to our room, how we began saying to each other: 'Surely this must be a man of genius. . . . we can't be mistaken about the music; never did we hear any one play so before. Yet we know the best London musicians. Surely by-and-by we shall hear that Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy is a great name in the world.'

My father's birthday happened while Mr. Mendelssohn was with us. There was a grand expedition to a distant mine, up among the hills; a tent carried up there, a dinner to the miners. We had speeches and health-drinkings, and Mendelssohn threw himself into the whole thing as if he had been one of us. He interested himself in hearing about the condition and way of life of the Welsh miners. Nothing was lost upon him. A letter that he wrote to my brother John just after he left Coed Du charmingly describes the impressions he carried away of that country. Sometimes he would go out sketching with us girls, sitting down very seriously to draw, but making the greatest fun of attempts which he considered to be unsuccessful. One figure of a Welsh girl he imagined to be like a camel, and she was called 'the camel' accordingly. Though he scorned his own drawings, he had the genuine artist-feeling, and great love for pictures. I need not say how deeply he entered into the beauty of the hills and the woods. His way of representing them was not with the pencil; but in the evening

his improvised music would show what he had observed or felt in the past day. The piece called 'The Rivulet,' which he wrote at that time for my sister Susan, will show what I mean: it was a recollection of a real actual 'rivulet.'

We observe how natural objects seemed to suggest music to him. There was in my sister Honora's garden a pretty creeping plant, new at the time, covered with little trumpet-like flowers. He was struck with it, and played for her the music which (he said) the fairies might play on those trumpets. When he wrote out the piece (called a capriccio in E minor) he drew a little branch of that flower all up the margin of the paper.

The piece (an Andante and Allegro) which Mr. Mendelssohn wrote for me was suggested by the sight of a bunch of carnations and roses. The carnations that year were very fine with us. He liked them best of all the flowers, would have one often in his button-hole. We found he intended the arpeggio-passages in that composition as a reminder of the sweet scent of the flower rising up.

Mr. Mendelssohn was not a bit 'sentimental,' though he had so much sentiment. Nobody enjoyed fun more than he, and his laughing was the most joyous that could be. One evening in hot summer we stayed in the wood above our house later than usual. We had been building a house of fir branches in Susan's garden up in the wood. We made a fire a little way off it in a thicket among the trees, Mendelssohn helping with the utmost zeal, dragging up more and more wood; we tired ourselves with our merry work; we sat down round our fire, the smoke went off, the ashes were glowing, it began to get dark, but we could not like to leave our bonfire. 'If we had but some music.' Mendelssohn said, 'Could anybody get something to play on?' Then my brother recollected that we were near the gardener's cottage, and that the gardener had a fiddle. Off rushed our boys to get the fiddle. When it came it was the wretchedest thing in the world, and it had but one string. Mendelssohn took the instrument into his hands, and fell into fits of laughter over it when he heard the sounds it made. His laughter was very catching, he put us all into peals of merriment. But he somehow afterwards brought beautiful music out of the poor

old fiddle, and we sat listening to one strain after another, till the darkness sent us home.

My cousin John Edward Taylor was staying with us at that time. He had composed an imitation Welsh air, and he was before breakfast playing this over, all unconscious that Mr. Mendelssohn (whose bedroom was next the drawing-room) was hearing every note. That night, when we had music as usual, Mr. Mendelssohn sat down to play. After an elegant prelude, and with all possible advantage, John Edward heard his poor little air introduced as the subject of the evening. And having dwelt upon it, and adorned it in every graceful manner, Mendelssohn in his pretty playful way, bowing to the *composer*, gave all the praise to him.

I suppose some of the charm of his speech might lie in the unusual choice of words which he, as a German, made in speaking English. He lisped a little. He used an action of nodding his head quickly, till the long locks of hair would fall over his high forehead with the vehemence of his assent to anything he liked.

Sometimes he used to talk very seriously with my mother. Seeing that we brothers and sisters lived lovingly together and with our parents, he spoke about this to my mother, told her how he had known families where it was not so, and used the words, 'You know not how happy you are.'

He was so far away from any sort of pretension, or from making a favour of giving his music to us, that one evening when the family from a neighbouring house came to dinner, and we had dancing afterwards, he took his turn in playing quadrilles and waltzes with the others. He was the first person who taught us gallopades, and he first played us Weber's last waltz. He enjoyed dancing like any other young man of his age. He was then twenty years old. He had written his 'Midsummer-night's Dream' (Overture) before that time. I well remember his playing it. He left Coed Du early in September 1829.

We saw Mr. Mendelssohn whenever he came to England, but the visits he made to us in London have not left so much impression on me as that one at Coed Du did. I can, however,

call to mind a party at my father's in Bedford Row, where he was present. Sir George Smart was there also. When the latter was asked to play, he said to my mother, 'No, no, don't call upon the old post-horse when you have a high-mettled young racer at hand.' The end of it was a duet played by Sir George and Mr. Mendelssohn together. Our dear old master, Mr. Attwood, often met him at our house. Once he went with us to a ball at Mr. Attwood's at Norwood. Returning by daylight, I remember how Mr. Mendelssohn admired the view of St. Paul's in the early dawn, which we got from Blackfriars Bridge. But the happiest visit to us was that one when he first brought his sweet young wife to see my mother. Madame Felix Mendelssohn was a bride then, and we all of us said he could not have found one more worthy of himself. And with the delightful remembrance of his happiness then I will end these fragments.

In London Felix was upset from a carriage on September 17, and injured his knee so seriously that all his plans were destroyed, and his departure from England was delayed for two months, until the end of November. He had intended to meet his father in Holland and travel back with him through Holland and Belgium, to be present at Fanny's wedding on the 3rd of October. Instead of that a long and painful illness kept him in London, which, however, was relieved and sweetened by the devoted love of Klingemann, who went at once to stay with him, and by the friendship and sympathy of all his English acquaintances.

Felix to Fanny.

London: September 25, 1829.

This then is the last letter that will reach you before the wedding, and for the last time I address you as Miss Fanny Mendelssohn Bartholdy. I have a good deal to say, but am not fit for much writing yet. Although I began yesterday to sit up a little, and can therefore write better and smaller, my head is still quite dizzy from this long lying in bed and thinking of nothing, and the more I wish to compress into this letter the

quicker it vanishes, past recall. You know that it is the same with me, whether I express it well or badly, or not at all; but I feel as if I had lost all control over what I once knew, and my various thoughts about the coming change and new order of things, which would at other times have dissolved into one strain as soon as I began to write to you, are now straying hither and thither in wild confusion. But so it is; and when we see daily how all trifling occurrences, which one pictures to oneself, are delayed, augmented, or annihilated by reality, we stand still with awe and humility before a real event in life. With awe, and yet with joyful confidence. Live and prosper, get married and be happy, shape your household so that I shall find you in a beautiful home when I come (that will not be long), and remain yourselves, you two, whatever storms may rage outside. However, I know you both, and that is enough. Whether I address my sister henceforward as Mademoiselle or Madame is of no consequence. What is there in a name!

Indeed I have learnt now that we ought to be afraid of the slightest project and rejoice at the smallest success; it all depends on a coincidence of fortune. I wrote to you from Llangollen, how it came to pass that my two first days without Klingemann became very cheerful ones, and they were days which I had anticipated with dread from the very beginning of our journey: people, scenery, hours to which I had long joyfully looked forward, were in reality cold, unenjoyed, sometimes disagreeable; the smallest pleasures were disappointed by mere chance, and great pleasures came to our share for the same reason; and all and everything happened differently from what I had expected, desired, feared. Such I have ever experienced it, and such it will ever be. But instead of this making me apprehensive or anxious, it inspires me with courage, and, far from being afraid of little projects, I take up great projects with confidence. And so farewell ill winter.

Much better things I ought to have written, but it will not do. Say what you like, body and mind are too closely connected. I saw it the other day with real vexation when they bled me, and all those free and fresh ideas which I had before trickled drop by drop into the basin, and I became weak and

weary. Klingemann's epigram proves also how they rob me of the little bit of poetry left; and this letter shows it—I am sure in every line it is written that I may not bend my leg. But when once I am well again, then I will fly away from here, for now I have had enough of the smoky nest, and will again set out, to the west and to the south.[1] I have no longer a clear idea of our dinner-table at home, nor of Sunday evening among all the dear faces. I never feel more home-sick than when I dwell upon home-trifles—the round tea-table, father's Turkish boots, the green lamps; or when I look at my travelling-cap, which hangs over my bed, and which I shall take off at home. Well, the days are getting short and cold, coals are again an item in my weekly bill, as they were when I first came; everybody talks of the next season, and that means spring; things that are usually calculated by quarters are now counted by weeks, and soon will be by days; soon I shall be free, soon we shall meet! May I be justified in anticipating a joyful time to come; and whatever blessed and happy thing God can send to His children, may He grant to you, and give you beautiful, never-to-be-forgotten days!

Klingemann.—

First of all my best greeting to the whole house! Oh, that it should come to this, that you must all of you cry out upon the joint letters, which only tried to prove that you will be the poorer for one sweet wedding-guest, who still sits—or lies (as it happens)—in the big town of London, and is unable to circulate independently, gallopading and dancing. But the poor joint letters are not to blame for it; he wants a week now before he can get up (we make the best of the time), another week before he can walk about the room, and another last week before he can be set afloat; and I might be tempted to turn rogue, and bribe Dr. Kind to prolong the fortnight to three weeks, in which I would make my parting companion play me the most exquisite farewell banquets and concluding dances; but I will not. Once every day he indulges in bitter irony against fate; when he orders his frugal meal, he gives

The great journey to Italy and France.

his orders in sneering expressions, saying for instance, 'To-day I want for my luxurious dinner,' etc. Whereupon the fat servant-girl, who has not been instructed in satire, asks in a bewildered manner, 'Sir?' When she hears, however, that 'mutton chops' are contained in the bill of fare, she smiles benevolently, for she understands this purely human scale of bodily health, and discerns in it a variation on the sweet theme—recovery. Altogether no one must say a word against the lower class of English: all through this trouble the landlord's family are kind and helpful, and my own people inquire daily and with great concern after my friend. Goldschmidt procures us some pleasure or other every day. I did much myself towards cheering up my patient, by cutting off to-day a pair of whiskers of rare beauty, in this way putting on a negative disguise; and now I shiver.

The *engagement-epigrams* are now over; but I revolve in my mind a new collection, on 'Serious Occurrences in Life,' and so I made the following sick-room verses, based on a real event:—

Jalap (*Convolvulus Jalapa*, you know the plant?)
The patient turns over the leaves of a book,
On a pale, blue flower he gazes,
She gathered it lately for him by the brook,
A sad, sweet longing it raises!
Why do you sigh at that pale, blue flower?
Is the doctor's wondering question;
You swallow it down in your pill every hour,
And it gently promotes your digestion.

And so this is the last letter (I say with Felix, speaking to Miss Fanny) in which we roving young bachelors may call you one of our order. May you have delightful sunshine outside and inside, and may none but lovely notes ring in your ear. May the clergyman keep his oration within proper bounds, and not try to affect you too much. In autumn, about the third of October, should be everybody's wedding-day; that would be a capital leap, by which to get at once from summer into spring: what is to become of winter as winter, I, for my part, do not see. What can the warm stove be to a young couple, except a merry charcoal-kiln, in which they roast their paradise-apples?

Ah, dear me, why are these times so quiet, and why does Hanover meddle so little with the Turkish affairs? Setting aside the detriment to historians, our embassy despatches no couriers! A smart little war, that would occasion my going to Berlin in December with despatches, should receive warm acknowledgment, be neatly described, and bound in gold. Felix and I have been deliberating this morning, but I doubt whether we shall bring about the political confusion out of which this poetical harmony might arise; and yet I should be so necessary at Berlin, inasmuch as I should enjoy myself most divinely. Things never happen as one thinks they will, therefore perhaps this may come to pass. The rest is silence with Klingemann.

Felix.—

London: October 9, 1829.

I dare say everything about you looks gay, lively, and beautiful. If I could but for one moment look in over there, and see all the new splendour, the whole fresh life, all the changes, and every trifle, which to me would seem important enough! for everything which I thought so much about beforehand is now over, and the young couple are having their honeymoon.

Time goes swiftly as an arrow, although the minutes linger; the morning flies away; about noon visitors come; Klingemann is always with me, and I shall never be able to thank him enough for making me so happy now. Then again twilight comes on, then again the fat servant-girl comes with my dinner, and the long thin rushlight burns again before my bed, and then again I look whether morning will dawn soon. So and so many more thin rushlights, and I am with you again. I wish I were there now!

You cannot think how kind the English people are to me. As I cannot do justice to books, and am not allowed to eat meat, they load me with fruit and all kinds of sweets. 'We ought to keep account of the strange dishes and establish a larder,' says Klingemann. Lady Moller especially aims at over-feeding me, and as Sir Lewis, who comes to see me every day, is a famous gourmand, you may fancy what the puddings

and jellies are like which she sends me. Yesterday a great hamper arrived from Mr. Attwood in Surrey; on the top there were splendid flowers, which are now smelling deliciously round my fireside. Under the flowers lay a large pheasant; under the pheasant, a quantity of apples for pies, etc. Mr. Hawes appeared this morning with grapes, than which I never saw any finer or more beautiful. Dance sends me two home-made cakes from his old wife, 'because I praised them one day at her house.' Göschen sends beautiful strawberries, and everybody shows me kindness. You will feel somewhat moved when you hear that my former landlord called the other day, and finding me in bed went quietly away and returned the same evening with his wife's compliments and my favourite dishes, of which she had taken note, a plum-pudding and a kind of rusk, and that he appeared again yesterday at dinner-time with a fish and a 'German soup,' which I relished very much. Excuse all these eating details, they are my only amusement at present.

London: November 6, 1829.

I have just come home from my first drive, which I took with Klingemann. Air and sun are good things. I feel tired and exhausted, and yet so refreshed, healthier than ever. When I came slowly downstairs and the street-door opened once more before me, and the landlord's family stepped out of their rooms and congratulated me, and the driver offered me his arm to get into the carriage, an agreeable sensation came over me; but when we turned round the corner and the sun shone on me and the sky did me the favour to look a deep blue, I had for the first time in my life a conscious feeling of health, because I had never before missed it so long. London was indescribably beautiful. The red and brown chimney-pots contrasting so sharply with the blue sky, and all colours glowing, the shops looking so gay, the by-streets and background enveloped in blue mist, the full green bushes I last saw from my gig now transformed to stiff bare rods, and no green left except the grass, and the wavy line of Piccadilly clad in bright sunshine—so much life everywhere gave me a strange but very

agreeable impression, and I felt the power of returning health. I shall bring home with me a very dear memory of this town, and when I shall leave it outside the stage (or rather inside, for I am a 'burnt child') I shall look back many a time and think of the pleasure I have had here. For indeed it does one's heart good when people are friendly and set store by one, and it makes me quite happy to be able to say that they do so here by me. My stay has not been in vain, and the time will ever remain dear to me.

As you were pleased with what I wrote to you of my old landlord, the ironmonger, I will tell you some more of him: I had not seen him for a week, when he came one day and apologised for not having been here for so long. But he had been prevented by building a new kitchen and oven in his house; to-day his wife had done her first baking in the oven, and she sent me a cake that I might decide whether it was not better even than the produce of the former one.

Your letters have reached me, my dear parents, in which you appear so anxious about me, and you, my dear father, even talk of coming all this long way to me. What can I say to that? But, as matters stand between you and me (alas! or rather thank God!), once for all let me leave unexpressed my thanks and affection, otherwise I shall be *always* speaking of them and of nothing else; for I owe you all and everything, and so let my present feelings also be buried in silence. If but words were not so cold!—especially, *written* words!

In her letter of October 27, which I received only to-day, by Hamburg, Fanny scolds me for my impatience. That is missing the mark, for since the third week of my illness a lazy apathy has taken hold of me, which goes beyond all limits. I could now sit a whole day long on the sofa and do nothing. The other day I sat for half an hour alone in the twilight and thought of nothing at all, an undertaking over which I should at other times infallibly have fallen asleep; now, however, I carried it out wide awake and comfortable. I am reading the whole latter part of the eighteenth century: Kotzebue, Iffland, Meissner, Engel; part of Schilling, and three pages of Clauren I have also read, etc. In short, if I did but smoke a long pipe

and had a nightcap on my head, I might well, with my crutches in the background, pass for a hearty old uncle taken with the gout.

At last Felix spent some time for the re-establishment of his health at Norwood, Surrey, with his old friend Mr. Attwood, and from there he wrote on November 15:—

By the gods, not in vain shall the Attwoods have put this paper on my table, with sealing-wax, pens, and all. After my last letter of the day before yesterday I will write a very last one, the more so as I must tell you how glad I am that you like my 'Hora.' Your lines especially, my dearest father, have touched me to the quick; and each time you tell me that you like some music of mine, I feel as if I were twice as fond of that piece, or as if I had written it again and just finished it.

I must above all things describe the place. This is Norwood, famous for good air, for it lies on a hill as high as the cross on St. Paul's—so say the Londoners—and I am sitting late at night in my own little room, with the wind howling wildly outside my window, whilst the chimney fire burns very quietly. I have had a walk of two miles to-day, and the air has really had a very salutary effect on me: in the three days that I have been here I can feel how much stronger and healthier I have become.

I look forward with great pleasure to hearing the 'Hora' by the Akademie, It pleases Attwood very much. But nothing carries the day like your portraits, my sisters; the young English gentlemen perform St. Vitus's dance when I bring them down under my arm and show them once every evening; the young English ladies say again and again, 'Sweet creatures!' and I say, 'They are indifferent pretty indeed'; in short, if Hensel will come to England, the Attwood family and their circle are a sure card for him; he will have to do all their portraits, for his 'style' is not the last which they are in ecstasies about.

In my bedroom luckily stands old Attwood's music-cupboard, with the key in it; so I rummage among the music-books;

and after finding the other day no end of Te Deums by Croft, and twenty anthems of Boyce's and Purcell's psalms, what should meet my eyes in three big volumes but 'Euryanthe. Score'! That was a find! Now I am reading it through very carefully and enjoying it. The old gentleman ordered it over from Germany to get better acquainted with it than from the arrangement. I shall copy one passage from it, as it is very curious; it is the one in G flat, 'Der du die Unschuld kennst' ('Thou who know'st innocence'). You know, Fanny, how I always maintained that that passage sounded more like brass than anything else. And what do I find? M. de Weber gives it to the three trombones, trumpets, two horns in E flat, and—*two horns in D flat!!!* Is not that mad? And sweet flutes everywhere. It is lovely music, and it seems strange to me that I should get so well acquainted with Weber's favourite work here in England, where nobody knows it or can know it, and where they really treated him shamefully, and where he died. Cherubini's Requiem I have found too, and other things, and so the time passes very agreeably.

P. S. from Klingemann.—

In Berlin such a procession would have occasioned a whole week's town and table talk—I mean the procession that moved yesterday through the fields about Norwood without any disturbance of public order and Sabbath-regulations. In Norwood lives one of the most distinguished donkeys that ever ate thistles (but he lives only on corn), a plump, milk-white animal, full of vivacity and talent, appointed to draw a very diminutive four-wheeled vehicle. It has been brought up by one of Mr. Attwood's sons, William, the theologian. In the said vehicle sat Felix; the donkey trotted briskly along the road, several dogs frisked about the conveyance, on both sides or behind strode through thick and thin, uphill, downhill, the divine and myself, the former looking proudly conscious of his trotting and indefatigable donkey, and only complaining that he, the divine, had to read so many dry books in order to pass his theological examination. On our way home we were joined by another brother, with the sister and another dog. Felix got out

of his carriage and walked with us, and a caravan, consisting of one lady, four young men, the vehicle with the milk-white donkey, and three dogs, moved placidly up the hill and into the village, a glorious subject for artists—a subject that would have made an immortal work. The whole family consist of originals, and we modern ones must once more copy Goethe and think of the 'Vicar of Wakefield,' though there is only one daughter here. No one resembles the other, each carries on his own individual pursuit, and yet a family likeness pervades them all.

Then followed our dinner in London. There is little to be said about it, except that Felix afterwards performed a duet with Mrs. Anderson, and earned great applause. He then vanished to Norwood, leaving behind him, in opposition to the evil one, the odour of his 'high talents' and of 'the perfect gentleman.' You can hardly realise abroad how much an English lady expresses by that; it contains volumes of acknowledgment. I assure you that, if the great Apollo came himself, playing irresistibly on his lyre, and yet perhaps as a free-thinking Greek omitted to drink wine with the lady of the house, he would incur the greatest anathema of the civilised world—'He is no gentleman.'

Felix.—

Hôtel Quillacq, Calais: November 29, 1829.

So England lies behind me, and my visit is past and gone. It is a beautiful and beloved land, and, when its white coast disappeared and the black French coast came in view, I felt as if I had taken leave of a friend, and as if all the dear, kind people were once more nodding to me. It was a grand picture. But now it is past. I may call my last fortnight in London the happiest and richest which I have enjoyed there. Horn, to whom I could show everything, and who enjoyed and admired all with me, through whom I received the great impressions of London anew, and who soon felt at home among my friends, contributed much to my happiness. Late every evening there assembled in my room a circle of people such as may rarely meet again. Rosen, Mühlenfels, Klingemann, Kind, and Horn—it was delightful! What animated and merry conversation we

kept up, with nothing insipid or spurious—a jury formed sometimes to decide on the questions! They sparkled and darted flakes of fire when roused, and they were all of different character and divers views, and yet on certain points at one with each other. Really when I came home at night, knowing that I should find them all sitting round the fireplace (it was as late as eleven o'clock when we used to meet), I entered my room feeling singularly happy. I did not come from parties, as at the time of the turbulent season, but from smaller and more intimate circles of my English acquaintance, where one remarkable, interesting, glorious moment followed another. Sometimes one feels that some never-to-be-forgotten thing is just going to happen, and such a feeling I had often. Oh, how much shall I have to tell you! How shall I ever get done, with only one mouth?

1830–1834.

In course of time Hensel and Fanny came near the end of their wishes: the wedding-day was fixed, and on the 6th of September their bans were read for the first time. Abraham was travelling in Hamburg and Holland, and sent beautiful wedding-presents from there. His daughter thanked him in a letter interesting with regard to the fashions of that period.

Berlin: September 19, 1829.

. . . We have been so long without news of you, dear father, that our letters must take their chance of reaching their destination. The day before yesterday we sent one to Frankfort, and if we do not hear from you to-day this one will go there too. But instead of hearing from you, we have *seen* something from you, for your famous box has arrived, and its contents surpass anything I could have imagined. Again you have brilliantly displayed your taste and your munificence; everything is the most beautiful of its kind that I have ever seen, the embroideries, materials, and patterns all perfect; I am sure Nathan the Wise could not have brought home anything more exquisite from his travels! The beautiful veil has created a great sensation in the female minds, and gives us much agitation, veils not being the fashion here for brides. But I like a veil, I think it is so beautiful and fit for the occasion, and it would be especially suitable for me on account of my red neck. Therefore I have the greatest mind to wear it and be the first—sure enough not to be the last. All the people at home, Hensel and many others, also advised me to do so, but then again we feared it would make a show—in short, the cause is still pending. Ribbons, shawls, everything is most beautiful, and once more I thank you with all my heart.

Fanny Hensel.

We are very busy at present, and pass our mornings mostly in the shops, and I cannot enough admire my indefatigable mother. She appears never to be better, never more in her element, than when she can hardly fetch her breath with business. I find it almost impossible to tell her how grateful I feel, or else I must do nothing all day long but thank her. I will thank her in this letter, and she may read it. To you I owe the same gratitude, of which, however deeply I have always felt, I have never been so intensely conscious as now when I am going to leave, not—thank Heaven and you—the paternal roof, but at least your immediate guardianship.

The wedding was celebrated on the 3rd of October 1829. Fanny had composed her own wedding anthem for the organ, which was played in the church previous to the ceremony. Wilmsen preached the sermon. All the friends of course were present. Felix's absence was the only cloud on Fanny's happiness. In everything but this the young couple began their married life under the happiest auspices, which have not proved fallacious.

Hensel had been making great plans for the first year, to which Fanny, although rather incredulous, lent a willing ear. We know how ardently she had longed to see Italy in 1822, when the family were in Switzerland. Now she had married a man who, by his five years' residence, was thoroughly acquainted with that country, and who burned to show it to his wife. And as Hensel in his excitable artistic imagination was more prone to indulge illusions than face the reality of circumstances, he conceived the idea of a Prussian Academy at Rome after the model of the French one, an appointment to which he considered within his easy reach. He soon resolved to leave Berlin and undertake a journey to Italy. This plan, charming in itself, received an additional attraction by the following further combination. Felix was, as we know, after leaving England and paying a short visit at Berlin, also to come to Italy, and he again intended to persuade his parents to form a travelling plan with the rest of the family. He wrote to Rebecca on the subject :—

Glasgow: August 10, 1829.

My dearest Rebecca,—Now listen! I want to have a nice talk with you about the next time to come, of which at the present moment I certainly know more than you, for I am painting an elaborate ideal picture of it which I am going to lay before you. That is why I write, or rather sit down on the sofa beside you and whisper into your ear, quite softly. My voice reaches you all the way from Glasgow, and for the moment distance has ceased to exist, for you have no idea how I love you and how near you I must be in thought, at least, to be happy; how I owe you every happy hour, and shall never think or feel different all my life. Never! You may build a strong house on me, I shall hold firm. But it is strange that I could not write a note if you were not in the world, nor should I care to live. Good evening, darling Rebecca! Now listen to my great plan, but tell nobody! for not a soul has heard about it but you, nor shall any one know anything of it until I realise it. We two will keep our secret, and then suddenly take the others by surprise. If you will initiate Fanny and Hensel, you may—perhaps you may even think it necessary; but they are the only ones—with all the others you must be a model of discretion. Now the conference between us two begins. The rest of this letter is our secret.

I. I shall come to Berlin a little earlier and stay a little longer than I had thought I would: the reasons *why*, you and all the others shall hear from me when I come, and I know you will approve of them. Then I shall go to Italy in February, but my absence will not be one of three or four years, as was intended—no, not even quite so long as this has been. The reason is simply this: I shall have to compose a great deal and well, which I can and will not do unless I am with you. And then, suppose I continue my travels, to Berlin I shall always come for composing; then again go away and play my music to the people abroad, and return to you and compose, and again exhibit, and so on for some time; after which we must remain together, and for a *long* time, for if possible I shall settle at Berlin. Thus, I hope, for the next few years we shall have

many joyful meetings, in ever new happiness, and I like the prospect.

Now for—

II. I, by the grace of God F. M. B., Esquire, *I will* persuade our parents to go to Italy next spring and pay me a visit at Rome with you about Easter. I will it, and I believe I shall succeed. Do not doubt of the possibility, for I have turned the matter over and over in my mind and found it feasible. I will tell you how. Father has long desired to see Italy, only he could not make up his mind to the troublesome journey, of which mother is also afraid. Now when I come home I shall be the pet of the family, and be able, as you well know, to extort a lot of things; mother moreover will be favourably inclined for Italy when she knows part of her family are there, and I shall carry the final decision by storm (well knowing my ins and outs). As for the travelling inconveniences, I can do much to alleviate them; for the Highlands have given me an experience of such hardships, and I know how to manage them; besides, I shall come a long way to meet you. I am preparing a surprise for all of you into the bargain, which is likely to gain much credit for me and support my entreaties; it is still uncertain, I can therefore say no more about it, but you will see. It will come forth either on December 11,[1] or on the silver wedding. In my mind I have prepared everything, and it is my greatest wish. I shall manage prudently, and trust in God to help me. Now hear what you have got to do towards it: nothing whatever. Be silent about it all, as if I had never written to you. Rather change the conversation when it turns on Italy, and do not allow Fanny and Hensel to petition father and mother about it. I will take them by surprise, that is the best chance of success. But try and find out the merits of Hensel's plan—say that I urge him strongly in this letter. If you want to answer me, write to Klingemann's, and post it yourself. If you've nothing to answer, don't answer. Now what do you think of all this? A golden time we shall have, and a wreath of lovely days. How we will enjoy ourselves in the Vatican! For come to Italy you will

[1] The father's birthday.

and shall, and then everything will be beautiful. I hear you say that you know father and mother and the garden, and nothing can come of it. But I say I also know father and mother, and Italy is also a garden, and something *will* come of it.

Now we have done and I leave the room, you catch hold of me by my coat-tails and yet I tear myself away, but of course peep in at the door again directly after. You ask whether you will have two rooms of your own next winter. No, for I want one of them, and am going to paint again when I am at home. Good-bye. Think of Italy. Our meeting again is close at hand. I am full of spirits, and strains of manifold music are humming in my head. To a happy meeting, then! And success to our hopes! Your Brother.

The same subject is continued in another letter to the sister and brother, where we also find the first allusions to the *Liederspiel*, by which Felix hoped to gain his point.

35 Bury Street, St. James's: September 10, 1829.

'The thing is this' is the favourite phrase by which a young lady whom you and I, dear brother, esteem very much, will introduce her reports, and then nothing will follow. Now I make use of this expression with the difference that I am her brother, and that something very important does follow. The thing is this: that a committee must be formed for the arrangement of silver solemnities. Formerly I had thought of Fanny as our president, but in her very first suggestion she has shown so much consideration for a certain family (for instance, 'evening among ourselves at Hensel's, dinner at the Hensels',' etc.) that I declare her guilty of partiality, and in punishment of her crime depose her; appointing Rebecca to the office of a chairman: you and Fanny and I regular members, Droysen an honorary member, and Klingemann a corresponding member. Now for it. I request leave to make a proposal. What do you think of solemnising the silver-wedding eve in the following manner—three operettas, each in one act, with costumes, scenery, etc., a regular representation and complete orchestra? (I will furnish the orchestra during the whole wedding festival, and am speculating already for that purpose.) The operettas to be as

follows. No 1. 'Soldier's Love,' my famous work of that name,[1] to which father and mother are still partial, to be performed without the slightest alteration, and by the same persons as before. Is it a good idea? Then a new operetta by Fanny, for which Hensel must write the words, pretty, airy, lovely throughout, very tender and beautiful. Then an idyll by myself: all sorts of ideas are stirring in my head, it must be pretty. A sober married couple is to appear in it, acted by you two Hensels, a neighbour's daughter, a mad watchman, a disguised sailor or soldier, I don't know yet! A peasants' procession and A major all over. The intervals may be filled up with ices and cakes, allegory, prologue, and epilogue. I think this will amuse father and mother much more than a simple instrumental concert. For the rest of my plans I will refrain for this time, because I must first hear *yours*, and your approval of mine, and beg you will let me know your ideas for the wedding-day by return of post. This is the moment to testify to you, dear Hensel, that you are a great man. Your drawing is exquisite, and gives me pleasure whenever it looks at me, for it *does* look at me. So genial and beautiful too, and such a good likeness! and so very droll! Where in the world do you get such fancies? Fanny's large portrait is beautiful too, but I don't like it. I can see how well it is drawn and how much it resembles her, but the position, the dress, the look, the sybillic, prophet-like inspiration, all that is not my Cantor. The reality does not show inspiration on the surface, not in the raising of her eyes to heaven, the gesture of her arm, or the wreath of wild flowers, all which may be seen at a glance. It must *not* be seen at a glance, but only dawn upon one by little and little. Do not take this amiss, Sir Court-painter; but consider that I have known my sister longer than you, having carried her in my arms (forgive this stretch)—ungrateful dog that I am, who cannot even thank you properly for the sunbeams you launch over at me from time to time. If you could see me poring over your drawings, then in their company only and nowhere less than in London, you would feel that as thanks. But words are nothing.

[1] One of Felix's first compositions.

Think of my joy at your having the gift to clothe in shape the indistinct images which the rest of us may only treasure in our hearts, and accept my joy as thanks.

11*th*.—To-day I breakfasted with Klingemann, and our idyllic operetta makes good progress. I think it will be very pretty, and there is a splendid part in it for you, Hensel. Don't be afraid of the singing, I have provided for you. The watchman is a fine fellow, and will suit Devrient capitally.

Now I must say a few words to you, Rebecca, my grave ally—important words. Within the last days I have become pretty sure that our plot will be realised, or at least that our parents will have no objections to it: it is through a letter of father's that I have grown so confident. For one thing, I see that father is reawakened to his old fondness of travelling, which is a great matter. He says he would enjoy travelling about with me in Holland, and, although I am rather doubtful whether this plan may be carried out, it says a very great deal. Last, not least, he appears to have given up the idea that I ought to travel about by myself in order to learn independence, and he lays much stress on the result of my stay in England. That is the chief thing. Mind what I tell you, you shall behold orange-trees. How gentle, kind, and tender father's letter is I cannot describe to you, nor would it be possible to describe all his extensive travelling plans except by word of mouth. For the present, be satisfied with the assurance that I believe in our success. Father's letter is a proof not to be contested. Now you may rejoice a bit! But the injunction in my last letter continues to hold good. Say nothing! One more thing, I also see from father's letter that I am to stay with you in winter as long as we like (silence). Much good, much that is beautiful and happy, is implied in this. In short, it is my belief that when in December we are reunited we need not think of soon parting again.

When I come home I am sure you will often talk to me in English, to hear my pronunciation, discover blunders, etc. But I shan't answer you, not a word shall you hear of my cultivated idiom, no 'Never mind,' no 'I say.' 'This coat is good enough to drink in,' says Toby; 'this tongue is good enough

to rasp,' say I; and if not, you may smoke it and eat it. *A propos* of eating, one of you mentioned fresh oysters the other day, which made me melancholy, because it reminded me of the time in spring when they become bad and are out of season. Now I eat them from sheer melancholy, and just to pass the time. I stopped in Regent Street yesterday and looked at a map of Holland, with all the bustle around me, quietly tracing my travelling route, as the family letter has it, and examining the road between Elberfeld and Berlin.

The operetta promises well, I think. Hensel and Fanny are an aged couple; Hensel hates music and Fanny hates soldiers, and their son comes home disguised as a roving musician, but is really a soldier; every moment he forgets his disguise and shows himself in his real character; then the father dislikes him because of his disguise, and the mother because of his real character, though both cannot help feeling an affection for him. The watchman turns all this to his own profit: he too is a stranger, and the old couple, having received news of the return of their son, take the watchman for him; and both secretly manage to surprise one another with this son's arrival on the following day, which is Hensel's birthday and jubilee as village magistrate. The fellow is a clown, but they take honest pains to love him, and shut out their real son from all intercourse with the neighbour's daughter, always putting forward the watchman, who, instead of the soldier, serenades her on his fiddle. In the morning everything is happily explained.

The piece begins in the evening under the lime-tree. The serenade and a quarrel between the two young men take place during the night, and it ends on the morning of the jubilee. What do you think of these rough outlines? More when the time comes. Merry it will be, and merry we shall be.

Thus in the winter of 1829–30 two things went on together —the preparation for the parents' silver wedding (December 26), and, if we may so call it, the children's conspiracy for the Italian journey. The festivities, and especially the acting, were a perfect success. The 'rough outlines' Felix gives in his last letter had been shaped by him into that lovely *Liederspiel*

'Die Heimkehr aus der Fremde.'[1] The words were by Klingemann. Hensel in his character of the village mayor created a peculiar sensation: he had no idea of music, and Felix had therefore composed for him a piece on *one* note only. Mantius acted the son, Devrient Kauz, Rebecca Lisbeth, Wilhelm and Fanny the old couple. The wedding-day passed in a delightful manner, and everything went off most successfully.

Of the Italian project we cannot say as much: it failed in consequence of the decided opposition of mother Leah, who disliked travelling, and was much *too* fond of her beautiful house and garden to leave home without a forcible reason. Of course there was much disappointment at the wreck of such a delightful plan. Then in March, first Rebecca, and, after her, Felix and Paul, took the measles, and thus consummated *les petites misères de la vie privée* of this winter, the like of which the Mendelssohn family had never seen.

In summer 1830 an extremely delicate boy[2] was born to the Hensels, two months before his time. For a long while it was doubtful whether the child could live, and he required the most careful nursing. It stands to reason that the plans of the young couple were entirely influenced by this event, and that all ideas of an Italian journey were put off for years. In one respect this was certainly a blessing: it put an end to the uncertainty and unsettledness which are too manifest in Fanny's diary of the first year of their married life, and drove them to make fixed plans for their life at home, which they contrived to make most comfortable and delightful. Abraham had a studio built adjoining the garden-saloon, which afforded Hensel the great advantage of not being obliged, like other artists, to go out for his work. Every free moment he could devote to his wife, and Fanny could often sit with her work in the studio without losing sight of her household and the child. In January 1831 he took possession of his new painting-room, and at the same time opened a studio for pupils in a room built contiguous to his own, and which was forthwith frequented by several young people. These pupils were often

[1] Known in England, through Mr. Chorley's translation, as *Son and Stranger*.
[2] The author of this book.

invited to *fêtes*, birthdays, and Christmas entertainments, and contributed their part to the general amusement.

Under such happy and favourable circumstances, Hensel's painting could not but prosper. In the morning directly after breakfast he went to his studio, and worked with little interruption till it got dark. After dinner, which took place at half past four, he used in summer to take up his painting again, or, if too dark for that, took his exercise in the garden, generally playing at *Boccia*, a game which he had transplanted from Italy and was passionately fond of. The evenings, especially during winter, when the garden offered no attractions, he devoted to pencil-drawing, and, thanks to this, his portrait-collection became very extensive. It took its rise from small beginnings. The hastily sketched likenesses were first done in his little notebooks, then he gradually increased the size of these portraits, and they became more beautiful and characteristic as the artist's ability in using the crayon and catching the likeness developed itself. The collection in time became both famous and voluminous, and at Hensel's death it filled forty-seven volumes, containing upwards of a thousand portraits.[1] The early drawings are done with a hard and pointed pencil; the outline very sharply and distinctly traced, but rather stiff; the execution of all the details very neat and careful, but with too scrupulous a neatness, and a want of softness and roundness. The lights are put in with white. The whole style betrays the artist's former occupation with etching, and something of the sharpness and hardness of an engraving. He soon, however, began to use the rubber and soft pencil, and this style he gradually carried to high perfection, especially when employing *papier pellé* and producing the lights by scratching. His manner became more and more free and broad, the hard pencil stroke gave way to the roughness produced by rubbing, he no longer traced sharp outlines, but expressed the forms by soft shades; the hair especially is of exquisite beauty. So much for the technical treatment. In course of time they became more like paintings, block on block, then mere drawings. An

[1] They are in the author's possession. Some of the most interesting portraits have been published as phototypes.

essential change in the conception of his portraits, in his idea of a portrait-painter's task, went hand in hand with his technical progress. In the first volumes we recognise his aim to have been a faithful, so to say 'daguerreotyped,' rendering of the features, which caused a total neglect of the other claims of a portrait; his only object was an exact copy of the face. Gradually, however, an individual artistic comprehension became his chief motive, for which the sitters, as it were, furnished the material. When he found a face truly characteristic, he even in later years produced a perfectly *faithful* likeness. But generally an idealising, beautifying, and juvenising tendency prevailed, which called forth Fanny's remark, 'Wilhelm makes a baby out of a grandmother.' The surroundings, such as a landscape or an emblem (as for instance the firmament in the portrait of Quetelet the astronomer), are intended to illustrate the individual. Here likewise they are more pictures on a given subject than portraits; we might call them improvisations on a face. And nevertheless these at a first glance hardly nominal likenesses have a singular attraction even *as* portraits, and more and more as you look at them you enter into the spiritual conception of a thinking, clever artist's eye, and feel a fascinating influence. The most successful ones among the drawings of those last volumes may certainly range with the most perfect works in this branch of art. These portrait albums have a great intrinsic value in another respect—a value, moreover, which must increase in a measure as time goes on: they represent the interesting changes in fashion and costumes for a period comprising nearly fifty years. Finally, almost all the pictures bear the autograph signatures of the persons represented; but this adds to the *real* interest of only a part, for among the many hundreds of signatures only about a dozen are truly fine and characteristic.

To us this collection affords a lively illustration of the extensive social relations and hospitality of the Hensels. All these more or less eminent persons—be their remarkable quality genius, talent, beauty, or even rank—were more or less acquainted with the Hensels and Mendelssohns. The artistic world of course forms the largest contribution. Among the

musicians we find C. M. v. Weber, Zelter, Paganini, Henselt, Gounod, Hiller, Ernst, Liszt, Clara Schumann, Felix of course in several representations; among the painters, Cornelius, Ingres, Horace Vernet, Magnus, Kopisch, Verboekhoven, Kaulbach, Max v. Schwindt; among actors and singers, Mesdames Milder, Rachel-Felix, Seydelmann, Novello, Lablache, Grisi, Pasta, Madame Ungher-Sabatier, Madame Schröder-Devrient. Literature is represented by La Motte Fouqué, Theodor Körner, Cl. Brentano, Bettina v. Arnim, E. T. A. Hoffmann, Tieck, Varnhagen, H. Heine, Goethe, Steffens, Mrs. Austin, Paul Heyse. We find Thorwaldsen, Rauch, and Kiss, the sculptors, Schinkel the architect, Hegel, Gans, Bunsen, Humboldt, Jacob Grimm, Lepsius, Boeckh, Quetelet, Jacoby, Dirichlet, Ranke, Ehrenberg, etc. Nearly all the portraits were taken in the evening, during music or animated conversation, sometimes without even the knowledge of the originals. It was this which gave Hensel's pictures so much life and naturalness: he would not have a stiff, weary 'sitting,' and allowed people to move and talk as they liked. And if he had a peculiar talent for rendering life, he also possessed the gift of representing death in its solemn, grave beauty—a gift which stood proof in moments of the greatest affliction. To how many mourners has he been able to afford a melancholy comfort by this precious talent, especially in his own family! More beautiful portraits can hardly be seen than those of Schinkel, Fanny, and Felix in their last repose; in fact, that of Felix is the only really good portrait existing of him.

The Sunday-music at that time began to be a regular institution, and to show at once a tendency to become extensive. These musical parties were to Fanny what the albums were to her husband. From small beginnings, a holiday, or the meeting of a few intimate friends on a Sunday morning, by-and-by arose regular concerts, with choral and solo-singing, trios and quartets, of the best Berlin musicians, and before an audience that filled all the rooms. For many years it was the correct thing in the musical circles of Berlin—and, alas, the unmusical as well!—to have access to these *matinées*. Fanny took the greatest pleasure in rehearsing her splendidly schooled

little choir, which she generally did on the Friday afternoons. On a beautiful summer morning nothing prettier could be seen than the *Gartensaal*, opening on to the beautiful shrubs and trees of the garden, filled with a crowd of gay, elegantly dressed people, and Fanny at her piano, surrounded by her choir, and performing some ancient or modern masterpieces. When Hensel had a picture nearly finished, the doors of the studio stood open, and a grave Christ might look down on the merry crowd, or Miriam leading her own people would symbolically express on the canvas what was in living truth passing in the music-room. Much good music Fanny Hensel was the means of first making known in Berlin. Of one *matinée* in 1834, which must have been particularly successful, she writes: 'Last month (June) I gave a delightful *fête*: "Iphigenia in Tauris," sung by Mme. Decker, Mme. Bader, and Mantius: anything so perfect will not soon be heard again. Bader especially was exquisite, but each rivalled the other, and the sound of these three beautiful voices together had such a powerful charm that I shall never forget it. Everything went off beautifully. There were just a hundred people, amongst others Bunsen, in whose honour the *fête* was given; Lady Davy and several English people; the Radziwills accepted, but could not come, etc. Everything was most successful, even more beautiful than "Orpheus" last year. On the Sunday following I had a full orchestra from the Königstadt theatre, and had my overture performed, which sounded very well.' An extract from a letter of Fanny's to her father, written on the christening-day of her boy, may conclude the description of the first years of her married life:—

'I cannot allow such a joyful and beautiful day to come to an end, dear father, without writing to tell you how we have missed you. An event like this will make one's past life rise vividly before one, and my heart tells me I must again thank you, dear parents (for this letter is meant for mother also), at this moment, and I hope not for the last time, for guiding me to where I now stand, for my life, my education, my husband! And thank you for being so good—for the blessing of good parents rests on their children, and I feel

so happy that I have nothing left to wish for but that such happiness might last. I truly know and feel how blessed I am, and this consciousness is, I think, the foundation-stone of happiness.'

Abraham Mendelssohn had gone to Paris, and some of his letters to Leah may follow here.

Paris: July 13, 1830.

I should like to send you more than the dry intelligence of my having safely arrived here at 11 o'clock last night, but I cannot. I am so fatigued with all I have already done, seen, and talked this morning that I am almost out of my wits. But I am in Paris! Every entrance into Paris is an important epoch in one's life, and, however old, cold, and unstrung any one may be, the remainder of faculties must be spent in thoroughly rejoicing that one is there. If you be a liberal, the elections are all in favour of the opposition; if you belong to the ministerial party, in a moment the guns will announce the conquest of Algiers; if you be a philosopher (which I am not), Gustave Eichthal is about to explain to you at dinner the new theosophic-industrial system; if you be a merchant, you have just come home from the most marvellous monument wealth has ever and anywhere in the world erected to its own greatness, the *Exchange*, La Bourse, which, by the way, is now not only accessible to ladies, but actually frequented by them. If you be Rike Robert, you buy one of the fifteen hundred thousand hats to be had here; and if you be the town-councillor Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, you do the same as Rike Robert, for the only spot on the face of Paris is that caps are not tolerated. Some rumour of *bonnet rouge* has had the effect of forbidding any one with a *bonnet bleu* to *approach* the Tuileries garden; a night-cap, perhaps night-caps, because it is a *bonnet blanc*—or *blanc bonnet*. A cap combining all three colours would, I dare say, be the most objectionable. If, without stirring from the Hôtel des Princes, you be anxious to perfect yourself in piano-playing or composition (I want both, as I have got a little out of practice in travelling)—

Kapellmeister Hummel and Herr Meyerbeer occupy the room next to yours.

Paris: July 21, 1830.

The most positive profit I have hitherto reaped from my stay in Paris is the knowledge that married ladies wear a great deal of white and other sober colours, and that *young* ladies only are much addicted to *pink*; also that *all* ladies wear their hair and headdresses most sensibly, and are not attired in that ridiculous way our fashion-journals describe and prescribe, and our ladies consider their duty to adopt. I can assure all my beloved and honoured countrywomen, old and young, great and small, that the surest way of reaching the Paris ideal is *simpleness* in colour and shape; and that a Berlin lady who would come with her Gigots, Imbécile, curls and bonnets, would not find either a single prototype or a single imitator. If I make money here, I shall bring you a genuine elegant Paris costume, that you may be ashamed of yourselves and learn how to dress. Our whole 'elegant world' will be scandalised at it —*pauvres gens du nord, auxquels on n'envoie que le rebut*—I have always thought and said so.

I have been at the Louvre several times already. The splendid old paintings are still the same, but, alas! the eyes with which I look at them are not the same; scarcely ever before have I so much regretted my impaired eyesight. But the remembrance of old love and old enjoyment is vivid enough to make me bitterly and keenly resent the introduction of bad company into the assembly of gods. In the first part of the gallery, the École Française, they have placed, probably to fill a vacant space, all the Davids—Brutus, the Horatii, the Sabinian Women, Leonidas, Belisarius, and a horrid Paris and Helena, all the Girardets, Endymion, the Deluge (which used to please me at the Luxembourg, but which I cannot bear here), the siege of Cairo—in short, the devil and all his family. Happily this invasion of barbarians has as yet advanced only to about the eighth part of the gallery; and unless you are frightened away by these monsters, you arrive at last on hallowed ground. It is pleasant to watch the number of people working here,

mostly women, of all ages and figures. That disgraceful above-mentioned 'Paris' of David's, and Raphael's grand Holy Family *au berceau*, are being copied by three of them at a time. In the Musée des Statues I have found nothing new but a Venus of Milo, who has lost both her arms; I know nothing further about her.

To-day I have been, like all English people, in the Père la Chaise. That vast city of the dead gets more vast, more important, more interesting every day; it does not lack population, and wantonness and folly erect monuments more and more like houses and palaces. I found Talma, and many beautiful women of my time! My guide, an ancient Bonaparte soldier, said to me, 'Voulez-vous savoir le fin mot de tout cela? Plus d'orgueil que de sentiment!'

To-day the Pairs de France have received *lettres closes pour l'ouverture des chambres au* 3 *août*; from all I have observed I feel convinced that everything will be settled peacefully for the present. On both sides too much lies at stake, and neither has the courage to play *Va tout!*

Immediately after this letter was sent off, Abraham was taken ill, and thus we have nothing from him about the 'Three Days.' On August 16th he is able to write again:—

'. . . I have now made up my mind to remain here till the end of this month or beginning of September, personally to settle everything that wants settling. Yesterday for the first time these three weeks I dined out, with Koreff at the Leos', whom I really cannot praise and thank enough.

'When such a mighty instinct of revolution has shown itself in a nation, legal order in our sense of the word seems to me quite impossible. Constitutional forms and conditions of an entirely new kind must be brought about, if they are to suit and satisfy such a nation, everything existing is obsolete and becomes tiresome and ridiculous, and unless I am much mistaken this feeling exists already. A people like that of Paris has either, in the consciousness of its own power and majority, outgrown all the influence of individual superiority—and in that case the existing power is in great danger—or it

becomes a dreadful, irresistible weapon in the hands of those who know how to use it, and then again the established power is endangered. The "Three Days" appear to me to have spoken a great, mysterious word, the meaning of which has not yet been deciphered. One thing is clear: with Charles X. only a small part of the corruptness, baseness, avarice, and intrigue of the upper classes has been banished. The worst and most hostile elements remain behind, weighing on France like an impenetrable atmosphere, and more difficult to put down than the Garde Royale. My opinion is, *qu'il n'y a rien de changé en France, quoiqu'il y ait heureusement un Français de moins.*

'If you do not agree with me, consider that I have been ill for three weeks. God grant that I may be mistaken, and that in my seclusion, and perhaps owing to my seclusion, I may not see clearer than those who were and are in the turmoil. What has happened was necessary and unavoidable: so much is *certain.* Will what ensues and follows be good and right? "I dare not hope, but God grant it," says Jacobi. Oh, I am getting old!'

Paris: August 25 1830.

Many thanks for your charming letter of the 17th. May God preserve your enthusiasm and vivacity! But you are much mistaken if you believe that the *doctors* had forbidden my reading newspapers. No interdiction was needed. When I am obliged to leave a letter from you unopened for twenty-four hours, I can certainly read no papers for a week. Before the fever came on I was in a state of apathy and real good-for-nothingness, from which only sickness and all sorts of suffering stirred me up: it was not pleasant.

At Auxerre there has been a riot; the rabble pulled down the turnpikes in order to pay no more tolls, and declared they were obeying the king's orders: 'que désormais, il n'y aura plus de barrière entre le roi et le peuple.' This is a historical fact, although so truly Shakespearian.

A cabman who drove me one of these days told me that on the dreadful Wednesday when he and a number of citizens

fought in the Rue St. Honoré, several children from twelve to fourteen years of age armed with sticks had mingled in the crowd. He asked their leader, 'Malheureux, que fais-tu ici; tu n'as pas même d'armes.' 'J'attends que tu sois tué, pour prendre les tiennes,' was the answer, which could not be the invention of a cab-driver. It made me shudder, and I know nothing like it.

Paris: August 27, 1830.

. . . I like Hiller best. He is good-natured, lively, though not altogether without a dash of acrimony. The day before yesterday he introduced Hector Berlioz to me, the author or composer of 'Faust,' who appeared to me agreeable and interesting, and a great deal more sensible than his music. You cannot fancy how all the young people look forward to Felix. Berlioz has lately obtained the *grand prix de composition*, and for five years will enjoy a scholarship of 3,000 francs for a sojourn in Italy. He does not, however, wish to go there, but intends to apply for permission to remain here. (This is grist to your mill, Leah!) In all classes and trades here young people's brains are in a state of fermentation: they smell regeneration, liberty, novelty, and want to have their share of it. I confess that I have not yet come to a clear idea about the possible result of it all.

At Gérard's yesterday I saw something highly interesting and not soon to be forgotten: a portrait of Bonaparte in his cabinet, painted with an historical, diplomatic accuracy and attention to details which quite fascinated me. Gérard mentioned in the course of conversation that he has painted four hundred portraits in his life.

Talking of fascination, I was fascinated last night by Taglioni. It is something quite new! You all remember that what most delighted us both in Sontag and Paganini was the placidity, calmness, and composure of their execution. Taglioni's dancing has the same merits: her movements are never rapid, never violent. With perfect self-possession, and without thinking at all about the public, she follows the dictates of her own

grace and humour, seeking nothing and finding everything, never making an effort and accomplishing impossibilities.

But 'Guillaume Tell'!!! This very day I must pull Leo's head off his shoulders for his opinion of it. *Atroce!* and empty. I shall bring you the text, which in itself is a curiosity. In a passionate, tender duet Melchthal asks his sweetheart Mathilde (an Austrian princess, who is about to spend happy days with him), 'Vous reverrai-je?' 'Oui, demain,' is her answer, which I have at once translated into 'Oui, gâteaux.'[1] This same Mathilde says: 'Les rayons de l'astre de la nuit sont discrets comme mon Arnold.' How the author of the 'Barbiere' and 'Othello' could write such music I cannot understand, and such a dissonance is only possible in music.

Quiet is perfectly restored here, and to-morrow a review of over 50,000 national guards is to come off. But the Belgian disturbances are creating some alarm. I apprehend a stormy time. Revolutions engender revolutions. The young ones want to rule, and the old ones do not like it. . . .

Paris: August 30, 1830.

Yesterday (Sunday) five weeks ago I was at Montmorency; it happened to be the *fête du village*. From 5,000 to 6,000 people had come together to sing and dance, and to be merry: a few gendarmes were idle spectators. When at about eleven o'clock I came back to Paris, the *fête* was just over, and thousands were streaming along the streets in peaceful order. Three days after Paris was all fire and flames, and some 10,000 people lost life and health. All order was destroyed, tyranny and disorder were within an ace of gaining the day, and Paris of being ruined. Yesterday 50,000 national guards, well drilled and equipped, were assembled on the Champ de Mars to be reviewed by the King, 150,000 to 200,000 spectators present; not a trace of regular troops, police, or gendarmes—I have not seen a more imposing, peaceful, and beautiful sight in my life. These were the same people who three weeks before had been fighting so desperately, the same whom I had seen

[1] A popular Berlin expression, 'Ja, Kuchen!' about equal to 'Don't you wish you may get it!'

in a state of physical and moral excitement and fury never to be forgotten. None but old people, invalids, little children, and the dregs of the population had remained in the town, and yet neither out of Paris nor in Paris was the slightest excess committed.

This is indeed a miracle! Still I maintain that these awful and sudden changes of the most contradictory kinds display, or at any rate forebode, a state of things—in this country at least—which nothing now existing can outlive. A prosperous time for the young generation! They can and will make their way, and will find an immense sphere of action opening before them, whilst we retreat behind the scenes and see the smoke and the paint.

I have just received your letter of the 24th, and repeat that a correspondence at 150 miles' distance has its drawbacks: twenty-six years ago I made the same remark to you in a letter from Paris. Either I must have entirely forgotten, or you must have completely misunderstood what I wrote to you about my views of the present doings here. With all my heart and mind do I adhere to the principle of the *Journées de Juillet*, and consider them the most extraordinary event in history. But Jean Paul says that nobody is as good as his good impulses, nor so bad as his bad ones; and if the latter may be maintained of the French of 1793, I am afraid the former must apply to those of 1830. If you read what I believe I wrote to you, from this point of view, very likely it will no longer appear obscure to you. But I am fifty-three or sixty-three years old, and no one must blame me for liking quiet.

The Marquis de Praslin is going to some place in Italy, to notify the royal accession. *Tel ministre* father-in-law, *tel ambassadeur* son-in-law! This minister father-in-law is enough to make me hate the *Journées de Juillet*.

On May 13, his health being restored, Felix started on his Italian journey, whence he wrote the well-known letters published after his death as 'Reise-Briefe' and 'Letters from Italy and Switzerland.' He did *not* write home, and perhaps his

modesty even made him unconscious of the charm he exercised on all who came into contact with him. Marx, who in the beginning of the journey met Felix at Munich, wrote about it to Fanny Hensel as follows:—

Munich: July 21, 1830.

Over moors and marshes grown with broom; past the chapel where an aged pilgrim leans on his youthful grandchild; across the blessed plain where angels lay the cloth for the pious wayfarer, all the rushing wells and brooks which carry their waters to the roaring Schwarza, where the deer are roving, past the towns full of labour and pleasure—to the beloved sisters. One glance, one thought of you brings the north to the sunny south, through hundreds of miles. Felix by my side is enjoying your company in his morning dreams as I enjoy it whilst writing, and as we did both yesterday and the day before in talking of you till late at night! Just look here, dearest Fanny, whether for once 'the sun does not shine on my undertaking,' as the green leaf beside me desires it to do, and whether I really want the snow-mountains, which send me their first greeting from out of the clouds. We shall not, however, disdain to ascend them on the 24th, and be present on the 25th at the great 'redeeming sacrifice on Golgotha' at Oberammergau, a Passion-music with acting. They founded the institution centuries ago, and contrived so that every tenth year, and exactly on the 25th of July, when we are at hand, the solemnity up in the hills will take place. This is Wednesday morning, 21st, and I am going to send off the first lines I have written since Berlin.

What we have done up to this date and are still doing is easily said: we are mylording it. I have deigned to accept the dignity of a viceroy. You may fancy, dear Rebecca, how this becomes me; I accept all homage with the grandest air possible. 'Dear Herr von Marx,' or 'Most honoured sir,' or 'Your honour,' etc.—thus they address me on all sides. 'How inestimable,' etc. 'We will carry you on our hands,' 'What can we do for you?' 'If you would but consent to stay a little while.' For (and now you must leave off marvelling) the

people here have caught at the idea that my own departure must be the signal of Felix's. And as the Egyptian mothers and brides sacrificed wine and lambs to the crocodiles, they want to burn incense to me, that I may not rob them of their pet lamb. If mine were not a noble nature, but a mercenary one, I might levy a contribution; in short, I am irresistible, a parvenu! On my way home, however, I shall not pass Munich, but travel incognito.

But seriously, you cannot have an idea of Felix's position here. Not a hundredth part of it can come out through his letters, and my description must, with the very best intentions, fall short of reality. That they would appreciate his music—that we knew beforehand. But now, he might make the most wretched music, and they would all be enchanted. It is worth standing by and watching how he is the darling in every house, the centre of every circle. From early in the morning everything concentrates on him. Yesterday, for instance, I had written as far as 'incognito,' and Felix was still asleep, when the ambassador's *chasseur* brought a note from the most sweetly writing Betty in all my acquaintance: as Felix could not come to dinner, would he kindly come at twelve, or some time in the afternoon, or some time in the morning; at any time she would be very happy, etc. Again the door opens, and in steps the *chasseur* of some Count (Protzschy or Prutzschi, or something like that, or unlike that, but certainly a very queer name), bringing a bouquet of carnations from Fräulein So-and-so. Then enters Munich's most distinguished pianoforte-teacher, begging to have a lesson—he has put off his own lessons as long as Felix is here. Then best compliments from the grateful Peppi Lang (oh, how much I shall have to tell you of her, even though she is not yet sixteen!), and she ventures to beg his pardon for offering him a keepsake (eight charming songs). Fräulein Delphine Schauroth—of at least sixteen ancestors—having spent the whole night over a song without words for Felix—nevertheless begs and entreats him to come at ten, instead of half past, or, if possible, even earlier still. To deliver this message Count Wittgenstein has to walk a distance of half an hour. Not to mention Staatsrath Maures,

Kapellmeister Stanz, Moralt, and other dry visits and messages, there comes an inquiry from Herr von Staudacher to the purpose that although they had Herr von Mendelssohn's promise to come to dinner, they begged to make quite sure of it, etc. A confidential note of Bärmann's follows, notifying that the Staudachers have ordered two puddings to please Felix. You will think this fragmentary list a sober joke, whereas it is merry earnest, and nothing but a fact. And now—but that would be too delightful!—you ought to accompany us and read in the smiling faces of the very servants what their masters and mistresses have been saying of their expected guest, how not one of them can be induced to announce us, how —but who can describe all the details, who can number all the thousand leaves on the tree of pleasure and kindness? Only when encompassing the whole you feel and understand that the love and interest flow through the smallest veins. I have overheard that grave pompous Staudacher carrying on a violent dispute with Bärmann whether Felix, on a certain occasion, first opened his mouth and then laughed, or laughed directly. *Literally so!* Me they have overwhelmed with thanks and handshakings for the composition of the E major Sonata—that is to say, for naming it to them.

It is a prerogative of the lively southern character to receive the beautiful and amiable with such warmth and kindness. The people, the foliage, the sky, the very stones here are full of that warm breath of life which creates joy and loveliness everywhere, and sheds a glory of manifold lights and tints far and wide over the rich country. Oh, Hensel, how often have I wished for you to share my joys and to lend your eye to me, marvelling novice that I am! How much I shall have to talk over with you of the valleys and the springs! Much have I seen, much have I thought, and, I believe, have found. I am longing to hear your opinion. But here I must conclude, for the minutes are counted and I am off to the mountains, and then I know not to which quarter of the world. Farewell, dear friends. No answer can reach me. In old love and friendship,

MARX.

The following letters were written by Felix from Munich:—

Munich: June 11, 1830.

My darling little Sister,—Are you quite well again? and no longer angry with your wicked brother, who has not written for such a time? He is sitting here in a nice little room, the green velvet-book with your portraits before him, and writing by the open window. I wish you very happy and merry indeed, this moment, because I am just thinking of you; and if you were so every moment I think of you, you would never be ailing or downcast. One thing is sure enough: that you are a capital creature, and know something of music. I felt the truth of that last night whilst flirting very considerably. For your brother is as foolish as you are wise, and last night he was trying to be very sweet. There was a grand *soirée* at P. Kerstorf's, and Excellencies and Counts as thick as fowls in a poultry-yard. Also artists and other refined minds. Miss Delphine Schauroth, who is adored here (and deservedly), was something of all this together; her mother being a *Freifrau von*, and she herself an artist and very well educated. I was very gallant. We played the four-hand sonata of Hummel together, beautifully and with much applause, and it happened that I followed her lead and smiled, and held the A flat in the beginning of the last piece for her 'because her little hand could not reach it.' Then the lady of the house placed us next to one another at supper, healths were proposed, etc. All I wanted to say is, that the girl plays very well, so as really to please me the day before yesterday when we played the piece together for the first time (we have now performed it three times). But yesterday morning, when I heard her alone, and again admired her very much, it suddenly came into my mind that we have a young lady in our garden-house whose ideas of music are somehow of a different kind, and that she knows more music than many ladies together, and I thought I would write to her and send her my best love. It is clear that you are this young lady, and I tell you, Fanny, that there are some of your pieces only to think of which makes me quite tender and sincere, in spite of all the insincerity that forms a social element in South

Germany. But you know really and truly why God has created music, and that makes me happy. On the piano you are pretty good also, and if you want somebody to love and admire you more than I do, he must be a painter and not a musician.

As I am alluding to Hensel, I must not omit telling him that Goethe inquired after him repeatedly with much interest, and wanted to hear about his occupations. I had to leave the green book with him for several days, and he bestowed much praise on it. He looked at the lamb-group in my album, muttering, 'They are well off, that looks elegant and pretty, so comfortable, and yet beautiful and graceful.' And so he went on —in short, Hensel, he is very much prepossessed in your favour.

Now follows a fragment of one of his poems for the chaos (to say how his unknown beloved one is to know him):—

Wenn Du kommst, es muss mich freuen,
Wenn Du gehst, es muss mich schmerzen,
Und so wird es sich erneuen
Immerfort in beiden Herzen.
Fragst Du, werd' ich gern ausführlich
Deinem Forschen Auskunft geben,
Wenn ich frage, wirst Du wirklich,
Mit der Antwort mich beleben.
Leiden, welche Dich berührten,
Rühren mich in gleicher Strenge;
Wenn die Feste dich entführten,
Folg' ich Dir zur heitern Menge, etc.[1]

Here is also a strange conclusion to a poem addressed to Fraulein von Schiller:—

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[1] When thou comest, I am joyful,
When thou goest, I'm in trouble,
And in meeting and in parting
Joy and grief will age redouble.
If thou ask me, I will duly
Answer all interrogation:
To my question, if thou answer,
Thou wilt give me animation.
If thou suffer, all thy ailing
Will as bitterly befall me,
And thy footsteps I shall follow,
When to mirth and dance they call thee.

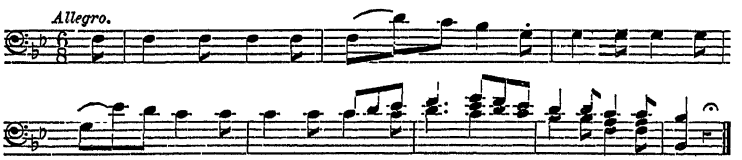
Milde zum Verständlichen
Wird die Mutter mahnen,
Deutend zum Unendlichen,
Auf des Vaters Bahnen.[1]

I write down both from memory only.

Yesterday a noble countess graciously praised my songs, and said, half asking my opinion about it, whether the one by Grillparzer was not actually delightful. I answered affirmatively, and must have appeared to her rather conceited until I gave her a full explanation by telling her that you were the composer, and promising to play and *dis*play at once in society the compositions you were next going to send me. If I do that, I am a peppercorn, or a brewer's horse; but perhaps you will not send any.

They have just brought me a light, and my next-door neighbour is profiting by the twilight to torment his piano, and is actually cutting to pieces Paganini's 'Clochette.'

As I passed Feucht on my hurried tiresome journey hither, I heard an uproarious noise in a house, and the postilion said, 'They are drinking there.' I listened, and the peasants were singing a great song about a huntsman, with the following burden :—



And now when I come back from a ceremonious call or a ballet (like yesterday's), or when I go home at night and ought to be thinking of all the fine phrases I have heard, I roar to my heart's delight—

Can't you understand? I believe several Munich people have

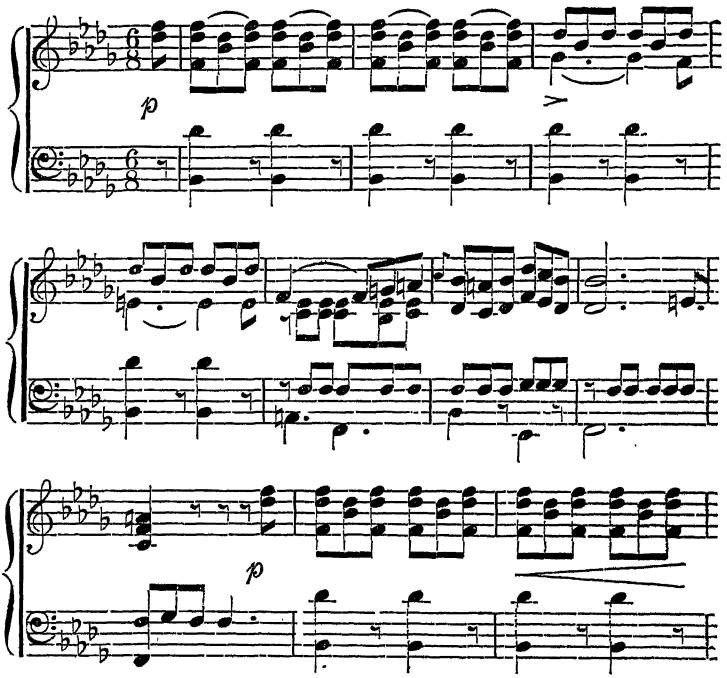
[1] Gently to the duties real,
Will your mother show the way,
Pointing to the world-ideal
And your father's lofty sway.

put me down for coarse in consequence, which I am not, having a noble soul full of love for you.

Munich: June 26, 1830.

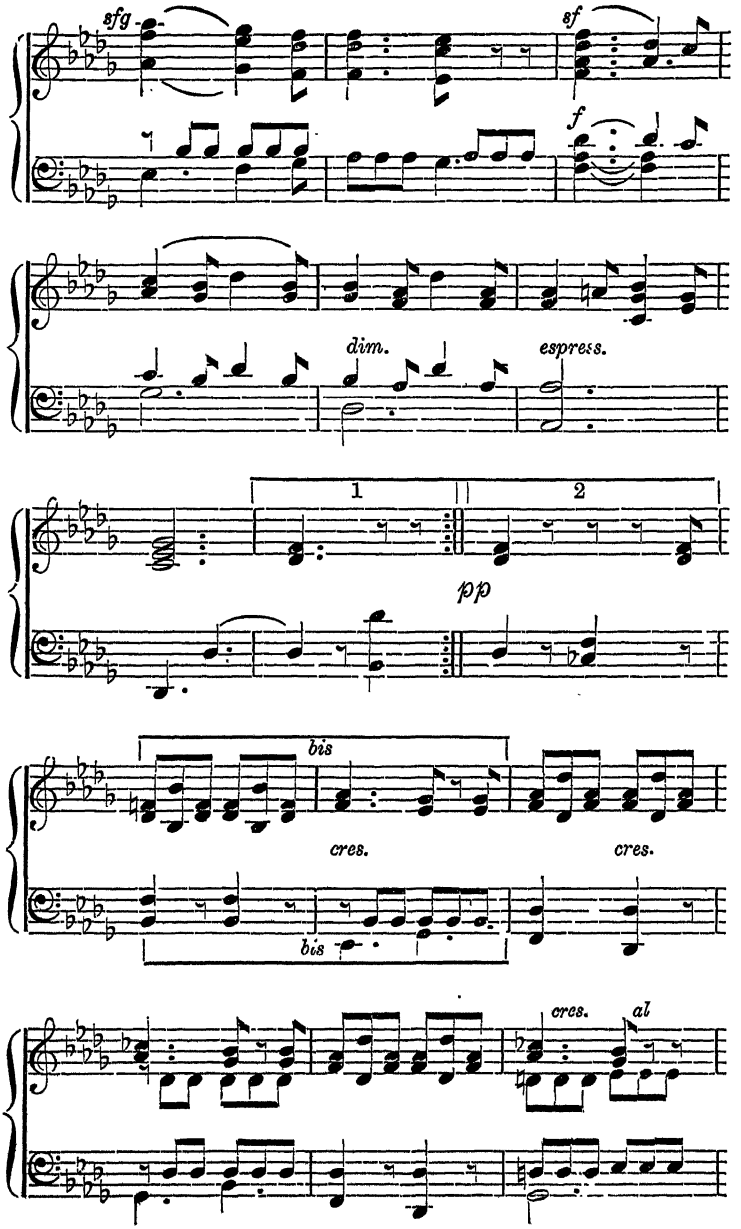
Dear Fanny,—My best love and congratulations.[1] Accept them as you accept all I can give you, not thinking of the gift but of the giver's heart. I am with you in my thoughts, as I shall always be, come what may. I wished to have sent you a song, but it is rather a failure.[2] I am just looking at it again, and think, 'Never mind!' I was a little fluttered, you will understand me; there it is, ἂ γέγραφα, γέγραφα. If it is too bad for you I cannot help it; it is written under the impression of that first half-anxious, half-joyful letter:—

Con moto agitato.



[1] On the birth of her son.

[2] This song, slightly altered, was afterwards published as No. 2 in the second book of *Songs without Words.*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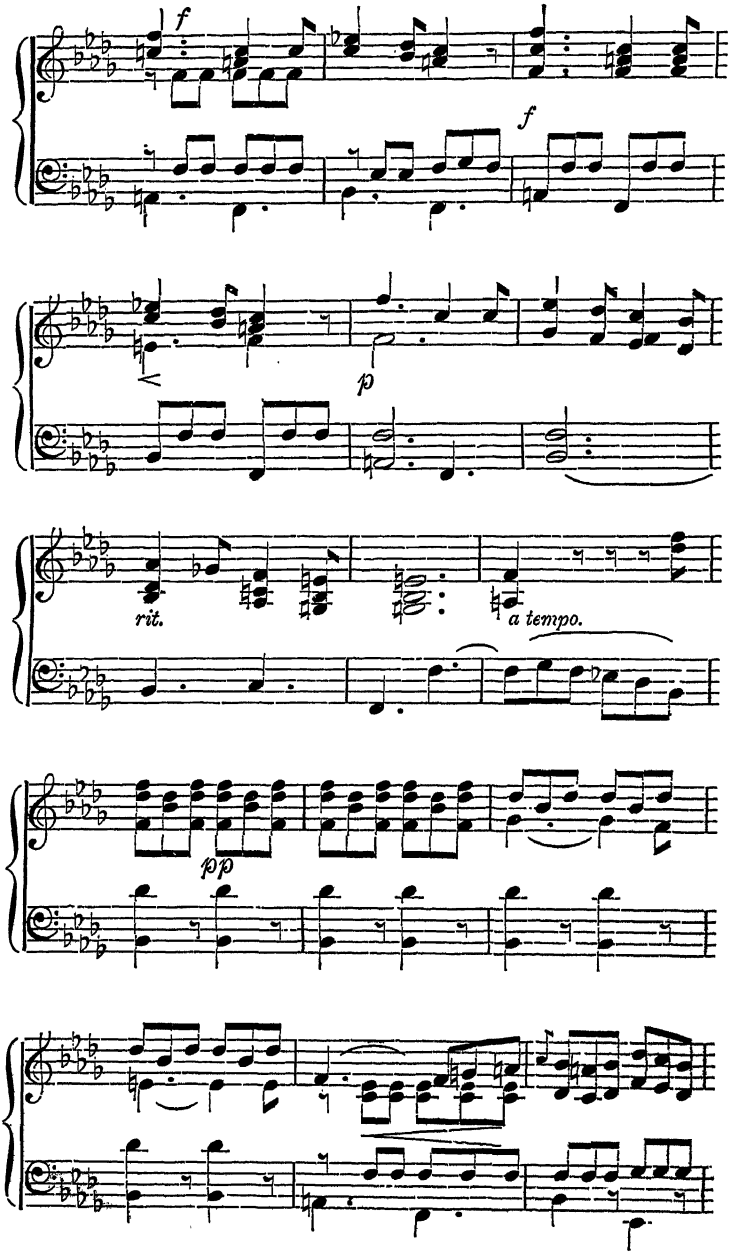
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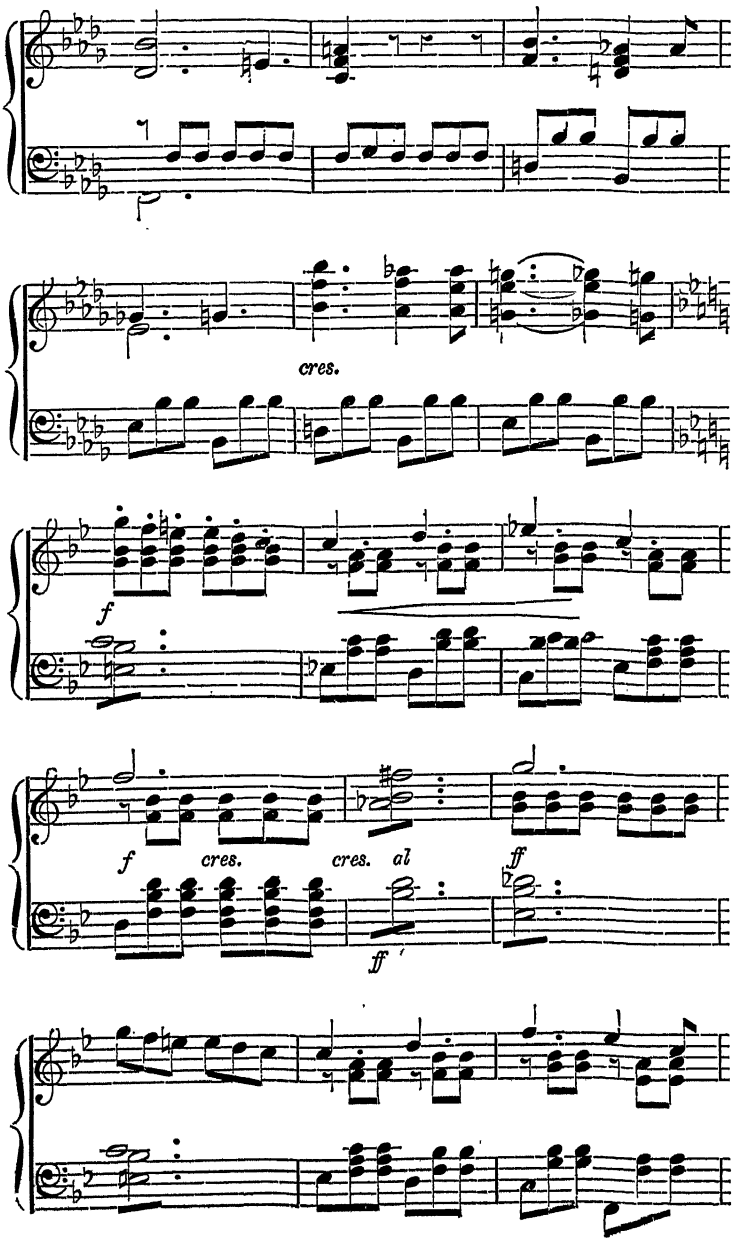
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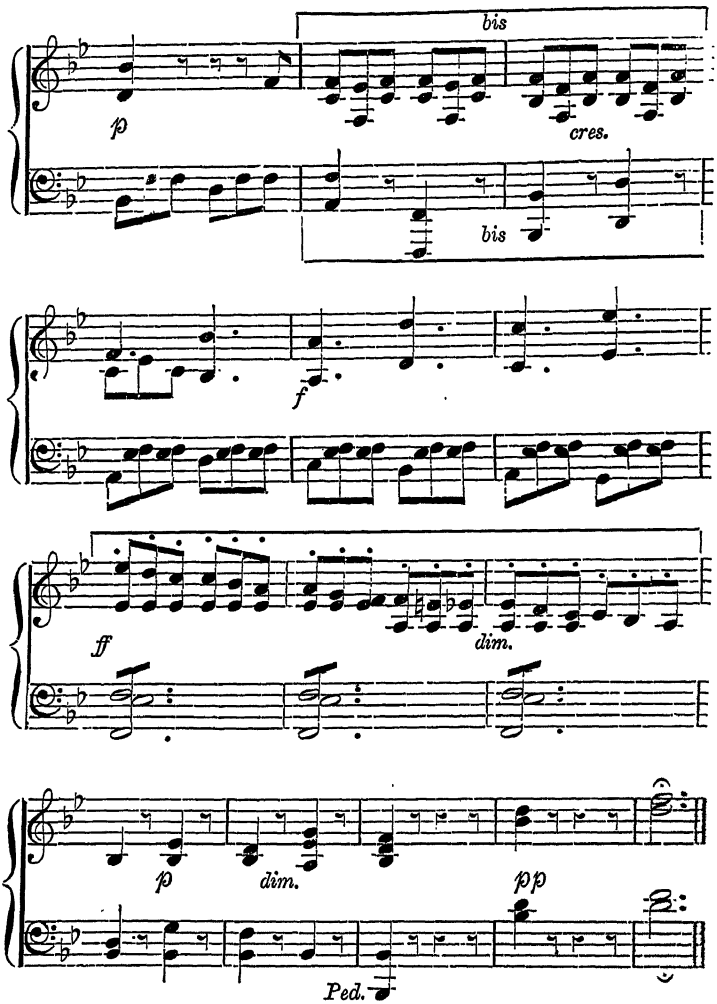

27*th.*—The song is not so very bad after all. To-day I received your good letter about Fanny's getting up again, and more such glad tidings. Oh, you darling sisters! When you write such long letters and with such a delightful confusion and such a lot of nonsense, a certain countryman of yours feels more deeply moved than he would by many a tragedy, perhaps because he knows you so well. Hensel must paint Rebecca for me just as

he likes; I shall be quite satisfied as long as it is exquisite. But seriously, O W. H., I will not prescribe to you with regard to position, wreath or no wreath. But do not make a fashionable portrait, nor a brilliant portrait, nor put volcanoes in the background, nor velvet drapery, diadems, or jewels in the foreground; but a quiet and bright *likeness,* brilliant through nothing but its intrinsic truth, without anything romantic or historical that does not really lie in the face, or any other attraction whatever, but again the face. I should think the position already found might suit this idea; but follow your own ideas, and if it turns out a pendant to my great Titian you will earn some commendation. Only simple and quiet, mind that. You see the portrait is already before my mind's eye. Were it but real!

As regards myself, I go every day to the gallery, and twice a week to Fräulein Schauroth for a long morning call. We flirt awfully, but there is no danger, for I am in love already with a young Scotch girl, whose name I do not know. Yesterday the before-mentioned university ball took place. I wish you could have seen me waltz with the rector's wife. It was beautiful! A garden-lawn covered by deal boards and hung round with drapery and flower-garlands was our dancing-room; the trees were decked with coloured Chinese lamps; when it was quite dark, we had fireworks; then followed a transparency representing the university, and then a great illumination. I met my special friend the Nuncio, and also the Duc de Bordeaux's tutor, M. Martin, who made very eager inquiries after Aunt Jette, and begged me to tell her a thousand 'things'—for we spoke French. In a dark avenue there suddenly appeared Hensel's portrait of Ringseis, and for the sake of the likeness I requested to be introduced to its original, who inquired very kindly after you all. On my right they talked Russian; the most beautiful burghers' daughters with their pretty caps walked under the big trees. Higher up, in a surrounding circle, the Austrian ambassador was sitting, and Frau von So-and-So and Baroness So-and-So, and Saphir—without a necktie. There were also a number of grave professors, sweet officers, trumpets for accompanying the students' songs—in short, it was a gay

and original *fête*, and a complete success. I walked home by myself, and not knowing my way went boldly through the fields in the direction where I thought the town must be; and with the sound of the dancing-music in the distance, a glorious sky above, wending my way through the corn in a strange country, was what I liked much. I had hit upon the right path, and came to a high dike leading along the banks of the Isar, to the great bridge. The river was roaring, and the lights of Munich were before me, whilst I could still see the sparkling lamps of the ball far away. My thoughts were with you: but I am over-loquacious, and one thing makes me forget the other. So it was not the ball chiefly that I wanted to talk about, nor my lonesome walk home, nor the burghers' daughters in their silver caps, but I had meant to tell you how I was introduced to the young Scotchwoman, and how I spoke English to her the whole evening, and how I showed her some politeness this morning, and how we met again—by chance. This young Scotchwoman, then . . . FELIX.

From Munich he went by Vienna, Venice, and Florence to Rome, where he spent the greater part of winter, then to Naples. For an intended journey to Sicily he did not obtain his father's consent. After a second stay in Rome and Florence he passed Genoa and Milan on his way to Switzerland, where he travelled in dreadful weather all through the country, and also south-western Germany, mostly walking. Of this a minute account is given in the 'Letters from Italy and Switzerland.'

From Frankfort he wrote the following letter to Fanny on November 14, 1831, shortly after receiving the news of Rebecca's engagement and the death of his aunt Henrietta.

O my darling sister and fellow-musician,—To-day is your birthday, and in sending you my best wishes I wanted to be merry and happy, when your letters came and brought me the news of Tante Jette's death and made an end of all joy in me. Yesterday I received the news of the engagement; to-day this sad news. What a change! I will give you as a birthday present one of the new wonderfully touching organ pieces of

Sebastian Bach's, which I have heard here for the first time; their pure and tender solemnity suits the day, it is like hearing the angels in heaven sing.

17*th.*—I was going to copy the piece when I began my letter, and put the music-paper ready in the evening. When I got up in the morning the whole copy was already made; Schelble had heard me talk of it, and got up earlier and did the work for me. This little story will give you a good idea of my life with him: every moment he puts me to shame by some new kindness, and his clear judgment teaches me constant lessons. I wish you could see and share my life here; its interest is enhanced by Philipp Veit, who is one of the most splendid fellows I know, delightfully amiable, gentle, and lively, and an eminent painter. You ought to see his new picture. We are generally together; in the evening we make music *in corpore.* The other day in the Cäcilien-Verein Schelble gave several things by Handel, a chorus by Mozart, Bach's 'It is the old covenant,' truly heavenly music, the Credo out of the great mass in B minor, and one of my choruses.

Now you and Rebecca play this chorale whilst you are still together, and think of me. When, towards the end, the melody of the chorale is soaring up high into the sky, and all is dissolved in harmony, it is truly divine. There are many others of equal power, but they are more severe. This one is fit for to-day, and in sending it I embrace you and Hensel, and hope you may continue to think of me as I think of you.

FELIX.

He next went to Paris.

Although the wonderful nature of Italy and the sight of the delightful treasures of art could not fail to make the deepest impression on him, everybody who reads his Letters must feel that his *heart* was in the north, and in Germany most of all. The letter he wrote to Zelter from Paris, February 15, 1832, and which is published in the later editions of the first volume, gives most striking evidence of this.

It was not only the state of art, more in harmony with his mind, nor the character of the people, that made Felix give

such a decided preference to Germany, but the northern scenery and vegetation had also much more charm for him. Thus he writes from Florence:[1] 'I saw the gardens of the Pitti Palace yesterday in sunshine: they are superb; and the thick solid stems of the myrtles and laurels and the innumerable cypresses made a strange exotic impression on me; but when I declare that I consider beeches, limes, oaks, and firs ten times more beautiful and picturesque, I think I hear Hensel exclaim, "Oh, the northern bear!"' And in a letter to Devrient he writes about Switzerland: 'Not in dream or fancy, however beautiful, can you form an idea of this country, so different as it is from all other countries, from the shape of the mountains down to the houses. To imagine it one must have seen it. Every hill has its own character and its own physiognomy, dark or bright, old or young. You have nature before you whole and entire, and one glance encompasses all seasons, the sunny valley, the naked rocks, the winter storms and fogs over snow and ice, and whilst you stand on the very ice there are the green dale and trees and herbs below. Cannot you contrive to see Switzerland? for it opens to you a new comprehension of the Creator and His creation in its inexpressible beauty. Everybody should if possible see it once in his lifetime. What is sunburnt Italy compared to this vivifying freshness and healthiness? None but those who have been there can really tell what is verdure, meadow, water, spring, and rock. I have never felt so free, in such immediate contact with nature, than during these delightful weeks; and whenever in my life I may have another summer's roving, to these hills I shall repair.' And he kept his word: again and again, up to the very last year of his life, he directed his steps to Switzerland in quest of recreation after the fatigues of his visits to England, or to the banks of the Rhine or the Taunus-forests. Italy he never saw a second time.

A letter[2] written from Paris on February 21 to his father should be compared with the above-mentioned letter to Zelter:—

'It is now high time, dear father, to write you a few

[1] *Letters from Italy and Switzerland*, translated by Lady Wallace.

[2] Lady Wallace's translation.

words with regard to my travelling plans, and on this occasion in a more serious strain than usual, for many reasons. I must first, in taking a general view of the past, refer to what you designed to be the chief object of my journey, desiring me strictly to adhere to it. I was closely to examine the various countries, and to fix on the one where I wished to live and to work; I was further to make known my name and capabilities in order that the people among whom I resolved to settle should receive me well and not be wholly ignorant of my career; and finally, I was to take advantage of my own good fortune, and your kindness, to press forward in my subsequent efforts. It is a happy feeling to be able to say that I believe this has been the case. Always excepting those mistakes which are not discovered till too late, I think I have fulfilled the appointed object. People now know that I exist and that I have a purpose, and any talent that I display they are ready to approve and to accept. They have *made advances* to me here, and *proposed* to take my music, which they seldom do, for all the others, even Onslow, have been obliged to *offer* their compositions. The London Philharmonic have requested me to perform something new of my own there on the 10th of March. I also got the commission from Munich for an opera without taking any step whatever to obtain it, and indeed not till *after* my concert. It is my intention to give a concert here (if possible), and certainly in London in April, if the cholera does not prevent my going there; and this, on my account, in order to make money. I hope, therefore, I may say that I have also fulfilled this part of your wish—that I should make myself known to the public before returning to you.

'Your injunction, too, to make choice of the country that I preferred to live in, I have equally obeyed, at least in a general sense. That country is Germany. This is a point on which I have now quite made up my mind. I cannot yet, however, decide on the particular city; for the most important of all, which for various reasons has so many attractions for me, I have not yet thought of in that light—I allude to Berlin. On my return, therefore, I must ascertain whether I can remain

and establish myself there, according to my views and wishes, after having seen and enjoyed other places.'

Felix did not come home empty-handed, and the two principal works he composed in the south may be considered as characteristic of his turn of mind, which was decidedly Teutonic-Northern—the Hebrides-overture and the 'Walpurgis-nacht.' Neither of these pieces reminds us of the scenery in which they took their origin. From amongst the laurel and orange groves, his thoughts and affections carried him back to the waves of the North Sea and the oak-forests of Germany. In his Letters he several times dwells on the 'Walpurgis-nacht' —for instance, in a letter to Devrient:[1] 'Since then I have written a grand piece of music, which will probably impress the public at large—the First Walpurgis-night of Goethe. I began it simply because it pleased me and inspired me with fervour, and never thought of its being performed; but now that it lies finished before me, I see that it is quite suitable for a great *Concert-piece*, and you must sing the bearded pagan priest at my first subscription concert in Berlin—I wrote it expressly to suit your voice. And as I have hitherto found that the pieces I have composed with least reference to the public are precisely those which gave them the greatest satisfaction, so no doubt it will be on this occasion also.'

He was not mistaken. The 'Walpurgis-nacht' was always a great favourite with the public, but even more especially so with the performers. It was often sung at Fanny Hensel's Sunday-music, and invariably with a fervour and enthusiasm beyond that created by any other music. The performance of the 'Walpurgis-nacht' was universally looked upon as a special festive treat. Its harmonies were the last that Fanny ever heard—at a rehearsal of this work she died.

It was a natural, so to speak motherly, affection by which Fanny felt drawn towards this composition; for her Sunday-music had given a first impulse to it. Felix writes about it to her:[2] 'One of my pieces certainly owes its birth to this Sunday-music. When you wrote to me about it lately, I reflected whether there was anything I could send you, thus

[1] Lady Wallace's translation. [2] *Ibid.*

reviving a favourite old scheme of mine, which has, however, now assumed such vast proportions that I cannot let you have any part of it by E., but you must learn it for some future time.

'Listen, and wonder! Since I left Vienna I have partly composed Goethe's 'First Walpurgis-nacht,' but have not yet had courage to write it down. The composition has now assumed a form, it is become a grand cantata, with full orchestra, and may turn out well. At the opening there are songs of spring, etc., and plenty of others of the same kind. Afterwards, when the watchmen make a great noise with their "Gabeln und Zacken und Eulen," the fairy frolics begin, and you know that I have a particular foible for them; the sacrificial Druids then appear, with their trombones in C major, when the watchmen come in again in alarm, and here I mean to introduce a light mysterious tripping chorus; and lastly to conclude with a grand sacrificial hymn. Don't you think that this might develop into a new style of cantata? I have an instrumental introduction as a matter of course, and the effect of the whole is very spirited.'

In the year 1842 Felix revised the 'Walpurgis-nacht' and made some alterations, and then only it appeared in its present form. Two curious incidents relating to this work may here be mentioned. At one of the performances at Fanny Hensel's a very pious gentleman belonging to the highest aristocracy expressed his edification at the beautiful *redeeming* and elevating *Christian* chorus at the end—the good man having understood the hymn of the Pagans after the expulsion of the Christian watchmen in this to him more satisfactory sense. In Austria the censorship struck out the words: 'Mit dem Teufel, *den sie fabeln*, wollen wir sie selbst erschrecken'—'With the devil, *they imagine*, we will frighten them themselves,' and instead of it they put: 'Mit dem Teufel, mit dem Teufel, wollen wir sie selbst erschrecken.' So that in Austria the devil did not exist in imagination only. It may also be mentioned that several letters inclosing music which Felix sent from the Austrian parts of Italy never reached their destination; they were probably opened and confiscated, because the

officials suspected some high treason to lurk in those enigmatical crotchets

Besides these two chief works, Felix brought home a good deal of church-music and several songs, with words and without.

The G-minor concerto for pianoforte and orchestra was written in Munich, and the Capriccio in B minor in London. And he began the great symphony in A major, which in his 'Reise-Briefe' he always calls the 'Italian symphony,' and which he finished in Berlin. Not with empty hands did he come back to Berlin, to put the question to this city whether there was a place for him and his work.

Berlin has answered this question in the negative, although a place there was, and one exactly suited for Felix Mendelssohn, who possessed all the qualities desirable for it. Zelter had died during his absence, and the Singakademie was looking out for a new conductor. Mendelssohn had been Zelter's favourite pupil, had often been his substitute as conductor, and by the performance of the Passion-music three years ago had given ample proof of his ability. Now, after travelling through one half of Europe, received everywhere with open arms, his name known far beyond the limits of his native country, he came back ready to accept the place which the Singakademie had to offer him. They could have him for the asking, and he was even willing to take a joint-conductorship with Rungenhagen, and somehow subordinate to him. The academy, however, by a very large majority, elected Rungenhagen; and thereby, as Devrient in his 'Recollections' justly remarks, was condemned for years and years to mediocrity, good enough only to act as a foil to a newly founded singing association.

Felix spent the whole summer and winter of the year 1832 at Berlin, and gave several concerts. In one of these the Overture to the Hebrides and the 'Walpurgis-nacht were performed. The home-life was charming; all festive occasions, Christmas, the birthdays of Abraham, Leah, and Felix, were celebrated by dramatic or musical representations. All this was very pleasant; but on the main point—the plan of settling in Berlin—the year 1832, as it went on, brought grave disap-

pointments. Felix agreed with his father that he should not live merely as a private musician, but in a definite sphere of action and office; and as no other appointment but that just mentioned was vacant in Berlin, and as the fact that altogether Berlin was not the place for him became more and more evident, the painful necessity had to be faced that he must find his sphere of action elsewhere. So his life could not be what he had pictured it in that letter to Rebecca. No 'composing at home near the sisters and then going abroad to perform his music, and then again coming home and composing,' but he was to find his 'at home' abroad; 'abroad' he was to write his music, and only return to his old home as a visitor, and, if good luck willed it, perform there what he had written in far-away places, among strangers. What a different leave-taking this was from the one before he went to England, and the other, when he started for Italy! It was leave-taking for life, with both father and mother growing old. How often might they still hope to embrace their son! Such adverse circumstances could not but influence Felix's productivity: no important compositions date from this stay at Berlin, and this want of creative power, as it resulted from his low spirits, reflected itself again on them.

In April 1833 he left Berlin and went to Düsseldorf, where the ties were then formed which subsequently held him there for a permanence. We know how the whole life and doings and artistic relations of Düsseldorf had impressed and attracted him during his stay there after his great journey. For the present he accepted an engagement to conduct the great Düsseldorf Festival of 1833, and he profited by the intermediate time for a visit to England, where his Italian symphony was performed with great success by the Philharmonic.[1] Then he went to Düsseldorf for the festival. He had had the good fortune to acquire the original score of 'Israel in Egypt,' and the performance of this work was to be the chief part of the festival. His father went to Düsseldorf for the occasion, and in a long series of letters to his wife gives a detailed account

[1] For the dates of these and other events in his life, see Grove's 'Dictionary of Music,' art. Mendelssohn.

of the festival and of his journey to England with Felix directly afterwards. Some extracts follow.

Düsseldorf: May 22, 1833.

As you have only lately read Voltaire's novels, you will remember with what intentions wise Memnon went out in the morning, and how consistently he carried them out before evening. I am not wise Memnon, but only the son of wise Mendelssohn; and as I had charged Felix to take an apartment for me—*telle quelle*—as long as I paid for it, this being a *conditio sine quâ non*, the natural consequence is, that I am occupying one of the most beautiful rooms in the house of Herr v. Woringen, senior, with whom I have just dined, and who has this moment, whilst I am writing, brought me a jug of fresh water himself—the old President (he is seventy-four)! Servant, male or female, I have not yet beheld. This is how it all came to pass. In fearful heat, completely knocked up, I approached Düsseldorf, fixing my eyes on a building which answered the description of the music-hall, when somebody bowed to me very courteously and came up to the carriage. I bid the coachman stop, and, not knowing the polite gentleman, called out intuitively, 'How do you do, Herr von Woringen?' for no one else unknown to me could know me at Düsseldorf. He told me that Felix had not been able to find decent quarters for me in any hotel or private house, and that I must therefore put up at his father's. I resolutely declined, but he still more resolutely persevered, and among other arguments made the best of stating that the one apartment which Felix, to satisfy my wish, had eventually bespoken, was in a very dirty house. Now I myself, after the dreadful dust of my two last travelling days, felt so dirty, and so disgusted with my condition, that all power of resistance broke down before this last argument. Moreover, our conversation on the public road had to come to an end, so Woringen stepped into the carriage, I submitted to *douce violence*, and here I am! It would be impossible to give you an idea of the incredible kindness and truly antique hospitality these people show me *pour les beaux yeux de mon fils*, and I cannot deny that I bless the happy coincidence

of my meeting Woringen in the street and his recognising me, for I am extremely comfortable here. You shall hear about my travelling adventures and other experiences by-and-by; I must first write of Felix and the festival. When I arrived, he was engaged at rehearsal. Woringen ran at once to tell him that I had come, and quite triumphed at the news of my having taken my abode with them, to which fact Felix would not at first give credit. After a while he came here, and why should I deny or conceal that he kissed my hand for joy? He looks very well; but, unless my eyes deceive me, this short time has again changed him a good deal: his face is more marked, all the features are more sharply delineated and prominent, the eyes, however, still the same, so that the whole has a very peculiar effect—I have never seen a face like his. Nor have I ever seen anybody so petted and courted as he is here; he himself cannot enough praise the zeal of all the performers, and their perfect confidence in him; and, as it always has been, his playing and his memory astound everybody. His wonderful memory has stood him in good stead, inasmuch as it made them give up a symphony of Beethoven, which had been played here several times already, and put the Pastoral Symphony in its place in the programme. (It makes me melt to think that I shall have to hear it in this dreadful heat the day after to-morrow.) When it was mentioned, he not only instantly played it from memory, but at a small trial on the eve of the rehearsal, when there was no score at hand, conducted it by heart and sang the part of a missing instrument.

The bustle and flow of life and the interest excited by this festival are most peculiar and animating; a great many people are coming from Holland—for instance, one chief singer from Utrecht. I see with much satisfaction that there is really no room left in the town, for my stay in this house is very pleasant. The family is one of the main supports of music in Düsseldorf, and the father, seventy-four years old, as I mentioned, sings in the chorus, with a good tenor voice. Yesterday (I am writing all this to-day, one day later than yesterday, and believe I put a wrong date to my letter also, for yesterday must

have been the 20th), after I had dined with the Woringens, people dropped in for coffee, Madame Decker, Madame Schadow, and others. After coffee they made an excursion, which I did not join, being very tired and wanting to write. Felix had dined with the prince, and came home accompanied by Immermann, with whom I had a long talk. (Felix said that this visit was a great honour, Immermann being always so proud.) Then I had a few hours with Felix alone, and then we were called to tea, and I really fancied myself at home. We had our tea and bread and butter alone with the family, and remained together till half past eleven.

This morning the solos from 'Israel' are being rehearsed here at the piano, and this afternoon at three o'clock there will be a general rehearsal of the whole oratorio, which will last till eight o'clock, Felix thinks. I shall perspire as I did on the Righi; for as they have made the sensible arrangement, that everybody who has taken a ticket for the concert can have one for the rehearsal at ten groschen, there is nearly the same crowd at both. To-morrow there will be rehearsals both morning and afternoon; on Sunday and Monday the concerts; Tuesday a great ball and a third concert, when I hope they will give all the five or six symphonies of Beethoven one after another, have Madame Decker sing and Felix play, and then something more to finish up with. I am going to propose to begin this concert at ten in the evening and make it last through the whole night. This plan has several advantages: in the first place, only the nights have now a tolerable temperature (I may perhaps profit by them and the moonlight to visit the painters' studios); then nobody will be blamed for going to sleep, since the night is really made for that purpose; and so nature and art would work together. As introduction or overture I should propose the first chorus from 'Doctor und Apotheker,' and if Madame Decker would then sing the air from the 'Freischütz' (her grand success here), at the words 'Welch' schöne Nacht,' everybody might think or dream what they liked. I should call such a concert a *concert dormant*, in opposition to *déjeûner dansant*, and will leave the completion of these ideas to the committee for bad jokes, Leipziger Strasse No. 3.

Düsseldorf: Whit Sunday, 1833.

If there be one thing I repent of, it is not having come here, but having come alone, for a musical festival on the Rhine is a singularly beautiful thing, and one that can be originated by nothing but music, and in no other country but this. The extremely dense population of this district—perhaps more closely inhabited than any in Europe—the rapid, lively industry and means of concentration, have contrived innumerable conveyances and locomotives by land and water, and for these two days every one of these is put in activity. Since Friday steamboats, diligences of every description, *Extraposten*, coaches, private carriages, convey whole families from all parts of the country, as far as twenty miles round, and still farther, for instance from Breslau, to this festive town of Düsseldorf. All these people are accustomed to look upon pleasure as a kind of business, and take the utmost pains to enjoy themselves as much as possible. Indeed they call forth all their powers for the success of the festival; and it is only thus that such a crowd, comprising so many different elements, can act together, and accomplish such truly extraordinary things. Fancy that yesterday and the day before they have been rehearsing from eight in the morning till nine and even ten in the evening, with short interruptions for rest and dinner; that to-day, the day of the first concert (Felix's overture and 'Israel'), there is a rehearsal of the orchestra from eight to ten, rehearsal of solos here in the house from eleven till I don't know when. At these rehearsals not one of the voluntary performers stays away, and disturbances of any kind are due to the paid wind instruments only (they represent our royal chamber-musicians): all these people do their hard work gladly and conscientiously in this excessive heat, in order to enjoy themselves.

These furthering and encouraging elements are all still further assisted by the non-existence of impediments. Here they have no court, no meddling influence from higher quarters, no *General-Musikdirektor*, no royal this or that. It is a true public festival, for which reason I have not yet noticed either policemen or gendarmes, and the magistrates

undertake amply to water the road from the town to the concert-hall by means of the fire-engines.

The hall itself contributes much to the peculiar aspect of the whole. On the Berlin road, about 2,000 yards from the town, in a large shady garden belonging to a restaurant, they have built a hall 135 feet long, about 70 feet broad, and I regret to say only 27½ feet high (certainly 14 or 15 feet too low), without any ornament whatever, and—here I blush—whitewashed.[1] It seems incredible that music can sound well in a whitewashed hall, and yet such is the case. The room holds from 1,200 to 1,300 people; one third is partitioned off for orchestra and chorus, the rest filled with rows of chairs fastened to the ground and numbered, which I consider a better plan than numbered seats or benches.

During the pauses, which are longer than with us (for instance, the pause between the first and second part of 'Israel' will be at least half an hour), all rush into the garden, where quantities of bread and butter, *Maitrank*, Seltzerwater, curds and whey, etc., are served on large and small tables to single consumers or parties, this being the landlord's festival, and the whole thing not unlike a *Kirmess*. Meanwhile, the doors and windows of the concert-room are opened, after which, when the air is sufficiently renewed and the time allowed for the pause has passed, a loud flourish is blown from the orchestra, and the hall fills again with speed and spirit. Lazy or thirsty stragglers are called in by a second flourish, and again Israel cries to the Lord. Thus things went on morning and evening at the rehearsals, none of which I have missed.

Last night, however, the weather suddenly became much cooler, it rained a little, and the sky looks gray and cloudy, so that this beautiful order of confusion may this evening be disturbed. As a musical festival comprehends a conductor, I suppose I must say something about the conductor for this year—Mr. Felix—he is hardly called anything else here. Dear wife, this young man gives us much joy, and I often say to myself, Three cheers for Marten's Mill![2] He has indeed got an im-

[1] This is aimed at Hensel, who could not bear whitewashed walls.

[2] See vol. i. p. 73.

mense piece of work to do, but he does it with a spirit, energy, seriousness, and cleverness actually miraculous in its effect. To me at least it does appear like a miracle that 400 persons of all sexes, classes, and ages, blown together like snow before the wind, should let themselves be conducted and governed like children by one of the youngest of them all, too young almost to be a friend for any of them, and with no title or dignity whatever. For instance, by one strict injunction (and but for his pronunciation, which he may yet improve, he speaks well) he has brought about what no other conductor to my knowledge has been able to do, the abolition of that disgusting practice of tuning. On the first rehearsal day this charivari was quite maddening; that same afternoon he addressed them and forbade it, and when several of the players attempted to disobey he once more forbade it very seriously, and I have not heard them tune a single note since. Another abuse arose from the successive arrival of strangers from all directions, who met for the first time on the orchestra, and found their friends there. It had become the fashion to use the orchestra as a kind of parlour, where a great deal of talking and gossiping went on, of course highly detrimental to the rehearsal, the conductor having to shout with all his might, and even then without being heard; and since new-comers dropped in up to the very beginning, the disturbance was intolerable. The same kind of thing began this time on the first rehearsal day, and then Felix represented to them that he could not submit to it, that he neither could nor would shout to enable them to hear him, and that he must insist and rely on the most absolute silence and quiet in the orchestra every time he had to speak. He said this for a second time very decidedly and earnestly, and then I assure you that I never saw an order so strictly obeyed. They see that it is right and necessary, and as soon as he knocks and is about to speak, a general pst is heard, and all is dead silence.

By this means he has produced really fine *nuances* both in chorus and orchestra, which all assure me were always wanting before, and which of course gratify the performers and must raise the credit of their execution in their own eyes and ears.

Yesterday morning there was a first rehearsal of Winter's 'Macht der Töne' ('Power of Sound'); only a small audience present. Mme. Decker sang a grand aria *di bravura*, so beautifully that audience and orchestra broke out into enthusiastic applause. Last night we had the general rehearsal of Felix's overture and 'Israel'; the hall crowded. The overture was very well received, but the last chorus of the first part, 'He rebuked the Red Sea, and it was dried up,' and the first of the second part, 'The horse and the rider hath He thrown into the sea,' excited amongst hearers and performers such uproarious applause and enthusiasm as I have hardly ever witnessed. A quarter of an hour passed before they could go on again. And to think that this was in a paid general rehearsal! The chorus, although excellent, appears to me to have too great a predominance of male voices: all the painters are members of it, and by no means feeble ones.

Every one here believes that Felix has written the overture for the festival, and it is most characteristically adapted to the oratorio; it is a strange coincidence that really I could not imagine a better one for 'Israel.'

Düsseldorf: May 28.

. . . Last night it was beautiful! The Pastoral Symphony exquisitely performed, then came a cantata by Wolff, dreadfully dull, then 'Leonore,' universally enchanting and electrifying. After that followed a pause of three quarters of an hour. The garden was crowded. I met the Woringens; and the old president, a bottle of *Maitrank* in his pocket and a glass in his hand, poured out to me and refreshed me. A flourish in the hall, the stream rushes back. The orchestra, delighted and surprised at its own success, had agreed upon a second flourish for the moment that Felix came to his desk, and this time the whole hall joined in long and loud cheers. Winter's 'Macht der Töne' came next. One of the two Woringen girls, a charming young creature, has expressed in two words all that can be said about Wolff's cantata and Winter's piece. 'The "Macht der Töne" at least has power to irritate you, but the

cantata only sends you to sleep.' Mme. Decker, however, with her aria *di bravura* created a great and good sensation. The young ladies and, I believe, also the matrons of the chorus, had supplied themselves each with a quantity of flowers, and Fräulein Woringen kept hidden under her scarf during the whole second part a velvet cushion with a laurel wreath. The moment Felix descended he received a volley of flowers, and (as I have been *told*, for I sat too far back to see anything, and had not heard a syllable of it before) he made a face half astonished, half angry, when the first bouquet flew about his head. They pushed him, however, up to his place again, where the eldest Miss Woringen wanted to crown him with the wreath. They say he nearly bent down to the floor to escape this homage. But a great strong man from the chorus held him up and stopped him, so that he had to suffer the wreath to be put on his head, after having four times defended himself against it, and to wear it during a continued flourish of the orchestra and cheers of the choir and audience. They say it became him very well.

We were all invited to meet at the Schadows' after the concert, but I wanted to go home, so as not to get over-tired. Wise Memnon was just as consistent as before. In coming out, or rather in being pushed out, I met Schadow, and he would not hear of my going home, but said he had something very important to tell me. In the crowd I gave my arm to Mme. Schadow, whilst he went to look for the carriage; but as neither the carriage nor he appeared, I walked home with Mme. Schadow. Sure enough the exciting scene in the concert-room had contributed to confound my wise intentions. Other people were no better, for just as we arrived at the Schadows' there came also with the rest of the party the eldest Miss Woringen, the one who had crowned Felix with the laurel wreath, and who, being rather delicate, had agreed with me that we two would meet at home. Now when we beheld each other at the Schadows' we laughed and exchanged mutual pardons for not keeping our word. They all set about a great deal of fun and merriment. Somebody sat down at the piano and played 'See the conquering hero comes,' and Felix had to put on his wreath

again, and they led him in a triumphal procession through the rooms. Hardly had a cup of tea been swallowed when tables and chairs were pushed aside and a wild waltzing and galoping began. Felix had first to play, but by-and-by somebody took his place at the piano and he rushed into the dance. Mme. Decker presumed that he could not dance, being much too grave and engaged with other things, but he soon convinced her to the contrary, and when she rested for the first time she said to me, 'Felix'—he always goes by that name here—'dances most splendidly.' The merriment was at its height when we sat down to bread and butter, for which Schadow poured out streams of Aleatico and Vino Santo. Luckily I had made a vow to abstain from wine, and therefore I did abstain, and so did Felix. Now they all began to sing in chorus, and very loudly too. Every one of us had to join, and when we came home it was two o'clock. The important thing Schadow had to say to me was to beg my advice about the choice of a keepsake which the committee want to give Felix. They had had Loos's medal struck in gold for him, but did not like it, and were going to keep it; some proposed a diamond ring, others a set of Handel's scores. I strongly objected to the ring, and was more in favour of the music, but thought it best to ask Felix himself, and Schadow agreed. I instantly did so, and he chose a seal, for daily use. Schadow thought his choice very judicious, and they have ordered a seal, after a design by Schadow, in Berlin, where they say there is now an excellent stone-engraver.

Yesterday morning at the rehearsal Woringen announced to the orchestra and to the public that for the first time in the history of the Festivals they intend to give a third concert. This proposal, which had strongly been objected to by the committee, because of its novelty and the fear of its going amiss, was received with universal applause, since Mme. Decker would sing and Felix play, and the second part of 'Israel' be repeated. No rehearsals were needed, and yesterday at eleven o'clock (I am writing on the 29th) the concert was given according to the following programme:—

1st part: Felix's overture; scene from the 'Freischütz'

(Mme. Decker); Concert-stück by Weber (Felix); Air from 'Figaro' (Mme. Kufferath).

2nd part: Overture to 'Leonore,' second part of 'Israel.'

The execution was excellent throughout. Orchestra and choir competed in a manner truly enthusiastic, and the last chorus sounded like inspiration. Felix did not appear before half past eleven, and I began to be uneasy—you know we are not quartered together; but when he came, he was received with three flourishes, and, after he had played, the whole concert-room, chorus and orchestra especially, were thundering with applause. The vocal solos were accompanied by him alone at the piano; and although he was thus at work during the whole concert, and had been, as I heard afterwards, unwell in the night, which was the reason of his coming so late, this did not prevent him from partaking of a dinner arranged in the garden, where the Cologne people presented him with a poem; then of a great excursion (no carriage, horse, even post-horse, was left in Düsseldorf), and lastly of a ball in the evening.

As for me, I felt so tired directly after the concert, so entirely knocked up, that after a wearisome walk home I went straight to bed, and have indulged in a twenty-four hours' repose, in order not to miss the grand dinner to-day, for which I was invited yesterday in all ceremony by a deputation of the committee. They first came to the house, and not finding me followed me to the concert, where the invitation was given during the pause. So from now I am the town-councillor and official guest.

The musical part of the meeting ended yesterday, and the rest of it we shall to-day bring to a worthy and festive conclusion. The days that have fallen to my share were beautiful, never-to-be-forgotten ones, and doubly enjoyable owing to my stay in this house. I owe them first to Felix, and next to all of you who persuaded me to go, and to whom I am truly grateful. Of this hospitable house I can only tell you when I come home —writing will not do; since 1813, at my Aunt Arnstein's in Vienna, I have experienced nothing like it. But I mustn't forget Mme. Bigot, whose mother took Felix into her house

when he was ill in Paris. There is something divine about hospitality, and its not being practised in great towns, and perhaps not being possible there, appears like a stain.

Now I understand Zeune, who, coming back from a journey in this country, wanted all Germany to form an alliance of hospitality, and am angry with myself for having in my metropolitan obstinacy pronounced the idea simply ridiculous. But how could it be otherwise? We have only one opportunity of showing hospitality, and that is when the court obliges us to receive the suites of their guests in our houses.[1] How can we be expected to receive such guests with true hospitable kindness? It is enough that we give the royal commission pecuniary *carte blanche* to practise. It is a long chapter!

To-morrow and the next few days I shall go about seeing everything worth the trouble, and have a talk with Felix about his future prospects, which appear to be taking a very satisfactory shape. Sunday or Monday I shall leave, carrying with me a deep sense of gratitude and lasting obligation to my kind friends. I wish I could but requite part of the good I have enjoyed! Perhaps we may find an opportunity of showing kindness to one of the young Woringens who is soon coming to Berlin as professor of jurisprudence.

Düsseldorf: May 31, 1833.

The musical bonfire has burnt out, and only a few sparks now rise out of the ashes, but so much the more does the smoke rise in the highest private circles; with which kind of smoke I have nothing to do. In the winding up of the Festival, as already described, things go on very merrily indeed, but though still excited we are all tired.

The dinner of the day before yesterday passed off admirably: Felix sat at the head of the table. He had before him a very ornamental and tastefully arranged trophy of musical instru-

[1] Throughout Germany, a regiment passing through a town is quartered upon the inhabitants for the nights of their stay there, and a merely nominal payment is appointed for their board. In Berlin and other large cities, different houses are exempted from this imposition on condition that they receive into their houses the suite of royal guests at the court. Such houses are distinguished by the name of 'free.'

ments and emblems, and on each side of him sat the ladies Decker and Kufferath. After the usual loyal toast Schadow proposed the health of Felix, with a few very well-spoken, well-sounding, and most honourable and earnest words. A great many other toasts soon followed, and along with them rather too much noise and merriment at the lower end of the table, which induced that part of the company which comprised the ladies to break up early. You may fancy how gladly I joined them.

The consequence of all these doings is highly important for Felix, and I will give you a short account of what is now settled, reserving all particulars for a later time. Felix has been nominated director of all the public and private musical establishments of the town for a period of three years, with a salary of 600 thalers (corresponding to about 800 to 900 thalers at Berlin). His engagement begins on October 1, and he has a three months' leave of absence every year, which he is allowed to take at any time between May and November. His public duty consists in conducting the church-music, his private obligations are the direction of the singing and instrumental associations—hitherto separated but now to be united—and the arrangement of from four to eight annual concerts of these associations, besides the musical festivals. I shall soon be with you, and then give you all the particulars, the origin of the whole affair, and the important ulterior consequences of Felix's position (which at once made me advise him to accept), the useful and important school it will be for him, the exceptionally agreeable circumstances attending the engagement, and the clever and noble conduct throughout of Felix himself. I am sure, dear Leah, that you will agree with me in rejoicing to see Felix in a fixed appointment, occupying him sufficiently but not too much in Germany, not far from us, and on the sure and straight road towards his higher ends, in artistic surroundings, beloved and honoured in a really extraordinary degree, enjoying unlimited confidence, at the head of established institutions looking entirely to him for their proper direction and development. I know not what position I could desire more suitable for him and his future.

Wise Memnon has written, 'I am sure I shall not go to

London,' and now in consequence of a letter from there received yesterday he is not quite sure whether he will not accompany Felix to Calais. I am going to decide two hours before his departure and send you word then.

One thing I especially like about Felix's position here is, that whilst so many others have titles without an office, he will have a real office without a title.

Düsseldorf: June 2, 1833.

I have now made up my mind to accompany Felix to-morrow morning. O Memnon! Meanwhile *vogue*—not *la galère*, but *le bâteau à vapeur!*

Yesterday we were till one o'clock at night with Immermann, who read to us his 'Hofer,' which he has completely altered: he assured me that Bartholdy's work on Tyrol had proved extremely useful to him. He begs to be kindly remembered to you, and intends paying us a visit in November on his way home from the Tyrol, where he is going in September. He is undoubtedly a very interesting man. I shall tell you more about him when we meet, or else in my letters from Buenos Ayres or the Canary Islands, or Greece or Constantinople, *car il n'y a pas de raison pour que cela finisse.* Anyhow, (D.V.), I shall dine in London on Thursday. Farewell, all of you!

Abraham had probably been prevailed on by Felix to come to his beloved England. The father's letter contains many pleasant jokes about the son's partiality for that country. For instance: 'Felix in his enthusiasm calls the shorn sunburnt yellow meadows "green," the black and gray horizon "blue," which I do not.' Or in another place: 'This morning at fourteen minutes past nine the sun was just powerful enough to give a yellow tinge to the mist, and the air was just like the smoke of a great fire. "A very fine morning!" said my barber (here called hairdresser). "Is it?" asked I. "Yes, a *very* fine morning!" and so I learnt what a fine summer morning here is like. Now, about noon, the mist has carried the victory, and along with a sultry heat the light is that of a Berlin November afternoon about four o'clock. I have to move my table close

to the window in order to see, not what I am writing, but *that* I am writing at all. Felix is gone to St. Paul's to play the organ, whilst I cannot make up my mind to leave the room. When he comes home I am sure he will say that nowhere there are such glorious summer days as in London.'

From this journey likewise Abraham wrote home a good many letters, of which we give the following extracts:—

Yesterday morning (the day after the arrival) I first went with Felix to Doxat's. On our way we passed St. Paul's, and I was surprised to find this mighty building in the midst of the city, having always imagined it in quite a different part of the town. But now I can explain to myself why that part of it which rises so high into the air is disproportionately large compared to the lower part of the building. In the city there is no room left except high in the air! From here we walked a long distance to go to Moscheles', who had asked us to dinner; the invitation had reached us through Neukomm at the rehearsal. I passed Oxford Street, Regent Street, Portland Place, Regent's Park, and must confess that in the splendour and taste of the buildings, elegance and cleanliness of the streets, good pavements, etc.—in short, in everything that impresses your senses without producing an effect on your mind, I have not seen anything to be compared to the wonders of that one hour's walk. But when I think of the grand aspect of the Tuileries, the Place Louis XV., the Champs Elysées, the Boulevards and Quais which encircle it all, and the certain effect which that point on the globe has day by day for years together never failed to produce on me, I can only say, London is the richest town and Paris the greatest town I ever saw. London, to be sure, is the largest also; London in the proper sense of the name (not being inclosed in walls) has now 1,400,000 inhabitants, and is surrounded in all directions and at small distances by independent towns, some of which have 30,000 or 40,000 inhabitants. These towns, as Klingemann justly remarks, are anxiously watching the gigantic jaws which will inevitably swallow them very soon.

To-day is Sunday, four o'clock in the afternoon, and I am still in slippers. The street is perfectly quiet, and not only do

I think this stillness very pleasant, but the whole tenor of the London Sunday appears to me perfectly explained by its strict necessity; whereas hitherto the prejudiced and stupid accounts of travellers and authors have made me consider it ridiculous and incredible. Sunday is as indispensable to the Londoners as fallow-time is to the fields, winter to the vegetation, night to day. Sunday is not kept only because a law commands it; but that law is here more than anywhere else the evident expression of the general wish, the urgent want. If the London people lived one year without the Sunday they would all and each turn mad or imbecile; and the more straining, fatiguing, and thoroughly exciting the life of all classes of population in London is during the six week-days, the more strictly will the great mass keep Sunday without any compulsion.

But I forget that I am writing from London, where every line makes a letter more expensive, and must try to be shorter. You will like, however, to know how truly beloved and highly esteemed Felix is here. I feel it best *par ricochet*. Old Mr. Horsley wanted to pay me a great compliment to-day by saying that he must call me happy to be the son and the father of a great man. 'Where is the cat?' thought I, and might have turned angry if I had not many times already had my joke about it and about myself for standing like a dash between father and son.

I converse in Italian with Horsley, for he speaks neither German nor French, and of Italian at least we are equally ignorant. Heaven knows what we have said and how we have understood one another. As regards my English, I do indeed call out, 'How do you do, sir?' 'Waiter, a mutton chop,' and other similarly profound phrases, but I shall not have forgotten my German when I get home, and I have enough vanity left not to speak English to ladies. How shall I manage next week? I have accepted two dinner-engagements, at the Attwoods' and Horsleys'—no 'parties,' but family dinners, and I must speak English. Whether it comes out of chest, head, or throat, it can not come out of my brains, for it is not in them.

To-day I have received a letter from you *viâ* Düsseldorf, the first for a long time. You say you are impatiently waiting

for news of us. Then my letters must have been miscarried, for indeed I have written many, and long and broad ones too, detailed, circumstantial. Oh, if they are all lost!

If by special favour you obtain a card of admission to Lord Leveson Gower's gallery, and the weather is fine, you see, as I shall hereafter describe to you, a beautiful arrangement of pictures, for half of which we might give our museum three times over. Amongst others there are three Raphaels, so undeniably genuine that X. would declare them to be Murillos, and the author of our museum-catalogue (what on earth is his name?) would make them out to be juvenile works of Pimperlepaccio's.

June 12, 1833.

. . . O Sebastian, I miss you here among many others, and I thank God that you are not the child four and a half years' old which a few days ago was advertised in thousands of placards as 'missing.' The thought of it never leaves me, and is interwoven as a black thread with my London life. The poor child has surely not been brought back, but was most probably stolen and thrown into the street, starved and naked, to be brought up by a gang of beggars and thieves. And all this because the parents perhaps lost sight of it for half a minute. So much for London!

I believe I have found a characteristic difference between London and Paris. In Paris, Germans, English, Chinese, and Turks may enjoy all the advantages of the place without giving up anything of their individual or national peculiarities; they can fancy that Paris is made for them, and belongs to them. Whether this be a cause or a consequence of the fact that an eighth part of the inhabitants are strangers, is no matter. But in England, I mean to say in London, strangers are ignored. Strangers are not to exist, there *are* English people only. A foreigner must entirely renounce his national and individual peculiarities, and must quite desert over to Anglisation and Londonisation to enjoy existence or opinions. This explains to me and somewhat excuses why foreigners who have lived a certain time in England appear much more like apes to us than those coming from France. You are almost obliged to pass through

an ape-like existence, until the adopted habits grow into a second nature—present *company excepted*, I mean Rosen, Klingemann, and Felix, although they all three nod their heads to the right when they bid you good-morning. Although I acknowledge that a native Englishman, or a foreigner who has quite adopted London nature, may enjoy the very highest degree of comfort, it is not to be denied that whoever can or will *not* be a deserter from his own nationality, like Count Pückler and myself, and *will* remain a long tail,[1] must miss and suffer a great deal here; for comfort, beside the typical English comfort, there is none. The final conclusion is, that I shall not make a long stay here, and intend to reserve all sorts of rhodomontade for my travelling reports at home.

I have just become lighter by half a guinea (weighing 3½ thalers), to hear Cramer play in his concert; but I mind it less than 1*l.* 14*s.* (about 12 thalers) which I paid at Dollond's for a very simple pair of tortoise-shell spectacles, through which I see just as much as through Petitpierre's two thaler ones, viz. as much as without them—nothing. I therefore know nothing of all the beauties Felix fell in love with at the morning concert, nothing but that they all wore bonnets and filled the whole inner space of the hall, three or four hundred Venuses in a heap. Cramer's playing is neat, elegant, soft, and refined; his concerto, although nothing remarkable, was pleasant to hear.

Quicker even than the steamer on the river and the horses in the street the guineas run out of one's pocket here; there is no stopping them, and I am surprised at the equanimity with which I see them glide out of my purse into that big gulf whence they never return. What a fool is a poor Berlin citizen here! For what I have spent here on carriage hire I could purchase the whole of the public carriages of Berlin. So I have become quite close-fisted. Not a penny shall the tailors make out of me here; and I go on wearing my green wig with wonderful obstinacy (yours, O Hensel and Fanny, resembles a river-god's more than that of an honest mortal), although two hairdressers have already lavished on it all the abuse in the

[1] An allusion to the English custom of cutting the horses' tails.

English language. I pretend not to understand anything, and answer, 'Very well.'

Do not expect a letter from me on Sunday; I shall probably not write again for a week, and will employ this week in some sight-seeing—not that I expect to be much interested with, for instance, the breweries or the houses of parliament: beer casks I fancy about the size of Mont Blanc, and pails like the Heidelberg tun; bigger I do not suppose they will be. And as for the M.P.s, whom I can neither see nor understand, I might just as well buy their portraits and make their speeches myself, or read them in the *Staatszeituug*. But one must see something.

June 23.

You know that merchants who pay fifty per cent. are among the most honest people, and so my conscience to some degree acquits me when I reflect that each time I wanted to give you an account of my doings I have put down nearly one half of my subject. It is now six o'clock in the afternoon; I got up at eight in the morning, and until now have not found time to begin this letter, which must be interrupted again as soon as Felix has finished shaving. This morning he played the organ at St. Paul's, and, as the bellows-blowers had gone, Klingemann and two other gentlemen supplied their places. Felix played an introduction and a fugue, then extemporised, then played one of Attwood's coronation anthems with him, for four hands, and lastly three pieces by Bach. It sounded very well; the church was empty, only two ladies, frequenters of the Philharmonic, stole in and listened unseen. From there we went to a regular Sunday-quartet which takes place at a private gentleman's,[1] in the inmost recess of his house. We chanced upon a quartet by Onslow; two of Onslow's quartets had been played already. They wanted to perform Felix's octet, but I begged for the quintet, and they played it, and gave the octet over and above. At four o'clock I came home and wanted to write, but just as I had written 'London' Baron Bülow came and sat with me for an hour and a half. It is a much safer plan to talk about the future, for the past is too soon forgotten. I must, however, tell

[1] Mr. Alsager's.

you, dear Hensel, that the day before yesterday I saw the exhibition of the works of living artists. The catalogue contained the most celebrated names and titles, but among the pictures there were no masterpieces. Never and nowhere have I seen such a heap of rubbish, not a single picture that betrayed anything but want of taste and talent, not one, I venture to say, that bore a trace of practical knowledge. Felix does not quite agree with me: he thinks a painting by Wilkie, a young Capuchin at confession, interesting and good, and for the sake of peace I give in and acknowledge one half of his praise. The aged Pater who receives the confession is sufficiently hard and grim; but as for the young one, I maintain (remembering Michel Wolf) that he must have taken an emetic for the occasion, and is just going to bring up his confession. There are numbers of the most wretched portraits, family groups, landscapes, altogether an abomination; a pity for the large room, very favourably lighted from above, in which these monsters were hanging.

You are uneasy, dear Leah, on account of not finding anything in our papers about the Düsseldorf festival, and you want to know the reason. I can imagine a very plausible one. If well and faithfully written it would make an interesting and amusing article, and with such our newspapers are not in the habit of spoiling their readers.

July 6, 1833.

I begin a fresh letter *à tout hasard*, though I sent off one only yesterday and have not up to this moment received a new one from you. The west wind does not care for my impatience, and will not become east before I cross over, and then I shall have it blowing against me. I suppose I must attribute it to my unexpectedly long absence from you, the different language, and the entire change in my surroundings, all of which 'like a new garment cleave not to their mould'—that the present seems cut off, and that my thoughts dwell so much more on the remote past. Here in London I think more of Hamburg than of Berlin, and revive, in grateful reminiscence of all the good that has been granted to me with you and through you, those

summers of 1808 and 1809. Not only do I daily think of our lovely pavilion in Flors Hof on the Elbe, with the view of the fine ships below, in foggy, smoky, heavy-aired, oppressive London, but I have been twice most especially reminded of it, at Greenwich and at Portsmouth. In Greenwich we dined at an inn situated on the Thames, the front wall consisting entirely of windows, overlooking the river in all directions. Amongst the company was my son, now a man, whom as a boy I wheeled about in a child's carriage at Flors Hof; you are missing, but thank God only for the present moment—others, alas, for ever! The time was different, but, as the Elbe did then, so the Thames now refreshed us with its keen invigorating air; and innumerable ships, large and small, moving by steam, wind, or oars, produced life and variety in almost perfect silence, that peculiar and gratifying charm about ships. Aged sailors from the hospital, young boatmen from the ships, all sorts of people stood about on the embankment under our windows, now and then merrily cheering the vessels, but mostly quietly gazing on the water. A thousand subjects for marine paintings followed each other; and with all the many reasons I can think of why the English have no artists, I still do not understand why they should not have, nor ever have had, a marine painter.

July 7.

I will try to take up Greenwich once more, and then tell you to-morrow about our last journey. Les Invalides and Greenwich Hospital represent France and England, army and navy. The former have grown old but not quieted down by a wild roving life, often leading to the most revolting crimes and immoralities, with cruelty and oppression far exceeding the demands of self-defence, and are even now kept in excitement by their whole *entourage*, trophies, banners, guns, generally not even their own spoil, and they are full of life and curiosity, and therefore less frequent visitors of their chapel than of the Bibliothèque des Invalides. The others, bearing the undeniable stamp of the element on which they have spent their life, of the narrow space which was their world, the hard work which was their lot, and the fearfully despotic discipline

which was their education, of the calm pertinacity which alone made them bear and conquer the thousand dangers which surrounded them. This bravery hardly ever or only in the rare cases of boarding showed itself in fierce struggle or individual acts of daring, which lose their importance and their effect immediately after the battle is won or lost. They therefore appear tired, quiet, thoughtful, gloomy, rude perhaps, but calm in all their movements, slow, respectable in their outward demeanour. About four thousand of them live in the hospital, which consists of two buildings of similar size and appearance, separated by a large open space and joined by iron railings. Both buildings consist of long rooms divided on the side opposite to the windows into a number of equal cells resembling cabins, each 5 feet broad and 6 feet long, inhabited by one man and furnished with a bed, which takes up the side towards the wall. This is provided for them, but the rest of the furniture and equipment they must find themselves. At the height of about 7 feet each cabin is closed by a movable ceiling, which we found open everywhere, but which they can shut at night, if it is cold. In each room there is a large fireplace, but I saw no other contrivances for heating. Of library not a trace, but in many cells I found books, and a great many had caricatures. All the cabins without exception were clean and in good order. On the days when the public is admitted—and I think this is every day—the doors of all the cabins are opened, and everybody may examine them. Better control there could not be for the pensioners or for the board of management, and the result is evident. Each room bears the name of a ship, and as much as possible it is so contrived that those who have served together in the same ship are quartered in the same room. I believe they dine together, and have as much meat and beer for dinner and tea and bread for supper as they like. At a small distance from these buildings, on an eminence which fills up the background between the two, is the observatory, Herschel's scene of action. Under these circumstances and with these surroundings, looking upon the Thames, which is broader here than the Rhine at Coblenz or Mayence, and upon the innumerable ships gliding over the river (ships regarded, however, by them with a kind of

proud contempt, as merchant-ships and not men-of-war), those old fellows who have not found their ultimate rest in the water await it in the earth. I liked them very much indeed. Perhaps the hospital would have been more appropriately placed at Portsmouth, as its inhabitants, tough and safe like the ropes on which they so often hung over the depths, would then have had cradle and grave together; for Portsmouth is a harbour of war, and the ships there are men-of-war!—aristocrats, calling themselves '*men*-of-war,' to distinguish themselves from the common herd of other vessels. . . .

I had the choice last night of going to Mrs. Austin's or of hearing Malibran, who, as you may remember, made hardly any impression on me when I heard her for the first time on the stage.

I decided for Malibran, *et j'ai eu le nez fin.* I dined with Klingemann, Felix being in the country, too far off for me to join him, and we arrived at our party about half past ten. We just came in for a quartet of Haydn's, which De Bériot played with sympathy, spirit, and precision, in short very beautifully, although perhaps now and then adding some modern French effects. Then Mme. Malibran sang some rather dull sacred music by the gentleman of the house, with great simplicity and exquisite delivery. After the singing of a four-part English madrigal and a glee, during which Felix arrived (I leave him to give you a description of these thoroughly English, very peculiar, and very pleasing airs), Mme. Malibran sat down and gave us a Spanish song, then at Felix's request two others, then an English sea song, and finally a French tambour-ditty. Although by this it is evident that this lady (J. P. Schmidt would call her 'our genial M. M.') commands four languages in her singing (Italian is a matter of course), that does not show, any more than I can describe it, with what flowing, glowing, and effervescing power and expression, what caprice and boldness, passion and *esprit*, with what assurance and consciousness of her means this woman, whom now I *do* appreciate, sang these ditties. From the same throat issued Spanish passion, French coquetry, with again a touch of primitiveness, English unpolished soundness, and also that somewhat frivolous but fresh and most

characteristic French audacity, with plenty of her own characteristic individuality: she loved, yearned, rowed, and drummed with such wonderful self-possession, such bold command and lavish expenditure of her inexhaustible means, that one may truly say she sang songs without words, she sang sentiments, effects, situations. It was something quite new, and I wish you could have heard her! Felix, who justly or at any rate wisely refused to perform after her, was fetched by her from the adjoining room and forced to the piano. He extemporised to everybody's delight and my satisfaction on the airs she had just sung. After that she gave us two more Spanish songs, and lastly, with two daughters of the house, accompanied by Felix, the trio from the 'Matrimonio,' exquisitely!

July 9.—Thanks and praise to God, and all happiness and blessing to you, dear Rebecca [on the birth of her child]. Well done! I am very glad! To Dirichlet I do not, at least not by written word, send a congratulation, as he could not even find it in his heart to write a line to me on this occasion. He might at least have put down: $2+1=3$. [Dirichlet was *the* most lazy correspondent.[1]]

He had fixed the very day of his departure, when an accident similar to that which befell Felix in 1829 crossed his plans. He hurt his shinbone slightly, and at first took no care of it, till, through neglect, it became a considerable wound. On July 29 he had to tell the news to his wife, and there he lay confined to his room, and unable to leave London before August 25. What attention and kindness he received during his illness he may tell us himself.

August 1.

Arrowroot, genuine East Indian—'one of my clerks brought it home from India not long ago'; port-wine forty years old, another kind of a more recent vintage containing no brandy—'my brother got it from Portugal for his own use'; Scotch orange-marmalade—'my uncle McLero, chief of a Scottish clan,

[1] The news had come that on the 6th Rebecca had given birth to her first child. About her marriage with Professor Dirichlet, see p. 315.

who owns one half of the Isle of My, has it made in his own house'; flowers, more beautiful and more fragrant than which all England cannot produce—'they come from our garden, we grow them ourselves'; engravings ancient and modern, unknown to me and partly very interesting.' To whom do you think I am indebted for all this, and daily visits and daily inquiries for the last fortnight into the bargain? To the Doxats? I have not seen them nor heard of them. The Goldschmidts? O no, to them I owe more. Moscheles and his wife? No, surely not, for of what they do for me I cannot give an articled list and account. My feeling must invent new words before I am able to express that, nor can I ever with dry eyes see them leave me. But in Hanover Terrace, Regent's Park, there live three sisters, unmarried, probably very rich, at any rate well off, highly fashionable, related to the first families in Scotland, and connected through their brothers' wives with very eminent London people, more direct descendants of some Scottish king of yore than I am of Schaul Wohl,[1] the one night's king of Poland. The eldest draws, and is very fond of paintings, and possesses some also; the second takes an interest in politics, and is a Tory; the youngest, still very pretty indeed, is an enthusiast and musical, and studies German. Felix has known them before, but never mentioned them to me, and I made their acquaintance without his knowledge at the Moscheles'. I was fortunate enough to gain their friendship, not so much through my talking of pictures with Miss Margaret (long life though, to pictures! they have always brought me enjoyment and luck), but probably more through my allowing them to get admission for me to several important galleries scarcely accessible to strangers, and to take me there in their carriage. I also accepted tickets to both Houses of Parliament, and showed several other similar acts of condescension, such as that of accepting their invitation to an evening party. This happened

[1] According to a family tradition, one of the ancestors of the Mendelssohns, Rabbi Saul, at one of the periodic vacancies in the royal Republic of Poland, wore the Polish crown for one night. They elected him in the evening for a decent remuneration in ready money, and hastened the following morning to kill him. W. Goltbaum gives a different account in his *Entlegene Kulturen*, Berlin 1877, A. Hoffmann, p. 296.

to take place on the Monday on which I first suffered from my leg. I could not quite conceal my pain, and, being taken ill directly afterwards, the good ladies attributed it to their *soirée*, and hardly knew what to do in their anxiety. The first day they made a proper call on me, which certainly was amiable; but when I declined to receive them, they did not slacken in their kind attentions, which I call still more amiable. If from all this, dear Leah, you draw the following conclusions—1, that I am becoming a *fat*; 2, that I have taken to drinking; 3, that I am recovering—I must confess that I have already had my own misgivings about Nos. 1 and 2, and as for No. 3 the doctors are decidedly of the same opinion since yesterday. I am not very uneasy about No. 1, but I shall certainly drink a great deal of wine in Berlin too—it agrees capitally with me—and eat plenty of meat also. Your health, Hensel!

August 2.—Madame Moscheles, my real kind fairy, who has been here already this morning to read the *Times* to me, and has promised to call again in the evening, has requested me to remember her kindly to you, and to tell you that you must believe nothing of my eulogium of her. But I say believe all the good, and add still more—the constant, attentive, graceful, never overpressing good-nature which prompts all her kind actions, which women only can possess, and among them perhaps especially a German with English experience. The Jewish blood *n'y gâte rien!* But with all that, I begin to be very impatient, and to receive all the kindness of my friends with less joy at their good offices than regret at owing them to others instead of to you.

You will be amused to hear that one of the Miss Alexanders, the one who is fond of painting, said to me, after I had spoken a great deal about you, that she was convinced you must be like one of Raphael's Madonnas. Now, although I felt flattered by the result of my description, and although, notwithstanding my love for the *Jardinière*, I have set ten thousand times more store by you than by all Raphael's Madonnas together, I would not make use of this jesuitic pretext, but said at once that her fancy carried her too far; that as regards the outlines of your features your face cannot be compared to the cheap beauty of a

picture. But she would not hear of this, and after a long dispute only consented to the compromise that if you were not like one of Raphael's Madonnas you must certainly be like one of Guido's; and there we left it. I was glad to know better, and how little a painted Madonna or Venus (even if Madame B. had sat as a model) would have suited me. Yesterday when the three ladies (who have not only the black costume like the three ladies in the 'Flauto Magico,' but also the peculiarity that each brings her own gift) called on me again, the topic was resumed, and Felix's book with Hensel's drawings made its appearance. Although Hensel, as a true son-in-law and Fanny's husband, has not flattered you or me in the slightest degree in this book, he would not, nor could he, exaggerate (as is generally his propensity) the brightness of your eyes, and on them seized Miss Margaret to prove to me that she had not been mistaken. I confessed myself vanquished, and when I looked at my own portrait I pitied you in my thoughts, and at the same time gratefully adored you for your unworthy choice.

August 9.

I am writing in my old room again, and have walked downstairs without difficulty or exertion, so I may hope for a speedy end of this *Intermezzo semi serio*. On examination of my cupboard I found, half a pudding, a pie, a very fine bunch of grapes (presents from my landlady), six pots of Scotch marmalade, and one pot of other preserve (Misses Alexander), two paper-bags full of cakes (Madame Moscheles), a roast fowl (Madame Goldschmidt), a bottle of delicious port wine *without brandy* (Misses Alexander), and a ditto of excellent claret (Madame Goldschmidt), all which demonstrates that if some people starve here others do not. But seriously, when those two most awful calamities, poverty and disease, are united—as they are to such an extent—what boundless and horrible misery it must be! I hope that my reflection on it will not pass away without bearing its fruit—a reflection which has most vividly occupied my mind of late, and especially so when I heard a few days ago that the wife and two children of an Irish labourer had died of hunger here, whilst I, a stranger, am receiving

kindness and attention from all sides.[1] Next to God, and more even than to my doctor, I owe my recovery to one whom, away from you, I like best being indebted to, and that is Felix. I can never tell you what he has done for me, what treasures of love, patience, perseverance, grave kindness, and tenderest care he has lavished on me; and much as I am obliged to him for the thousand marks of kindness and attention I received at other hands for his sake, the best ever came from himself, and my best thanks are to him.

It happened that during that very time a young Englishman acquainted with the family was laid up with an injured knee at Berlin. Abraham of course urgently expressed his wish that Leah should do all she could to make him comfortable in providing for his creature comforts, and, what he makes an especial point, in visiting him. The letter concludes: 'But why do I say so much? You are *yourself*, and you are your mother's daughter. Charity and thoughtful care and kindness are your hereditary virtues, and all I wish for has probably been done already, all except perhaps the *visit* to the patient, because that is not Berlin custom; but never you mind custom, and do what is sure to be a good action.'

At last the moment so long desired had arrived, and Abraham prepared for his departure. Felix wanted to accompany him to Berlin and to stay there a few days previous to beginning his duties at Düsseldorf. But they resolved to surprise the family with his visit, and so Abraham wrote in his last letter from London: 'I have made the acquaintance of a young man who is going to travel to the North of Germany and to stay a few days at Berlin. I like him very well indeed, and if he continues to please me I shall propose our travelling together. He has a nice musical talent, and I think you will like him too. When I remember the lively interest you, dear wife, took in M. Lechat (more a sisterly than a motherly one), and when I remember your enthusiasm not long ago about Klingemann's beauty; when, further, I consider how much this

[1] After his return home, Abraham Mendelssohn Bartholdy made a foundation in a Berlin hospital to provide for the gratuitous nursing of a sick person.

new musical acquaintance will interest you, Fanny, I almost look on what I am about to do as too risky, and feel that I must apologise to you, dear Hensel, for bringing him home. I have already hit on a plan of politely pushing him into a cab at the gates of Berlin, so as to enter the house without him and not find a divided interest the very first moment. Fortunately the whole thing will not last long, as he must soon proceed on his journey; and if you put me in the background for a young artist, I shall forsake you all for that still younger Sebastian. Everything you write about him touches and delights me, and I have a real longing to see him again. I have just noticed that I forgot to tell you the name of my new acquaintance. The young man is called Alphonse Lovie, and a painter by profession, his *forte* being portraits in pen-and-ink, which as his own peculiar style he has carried to a wonderful degree of perfection. I have seen him again to day, and consider it as settled that we shall travel together.

And so, whilst at Berlin they were puzzling to know who this Alphonse Lovie might be, to whom the father had, contrary to his habit, taken such a sudden liking, and whilst Fanny, quite disheartened, noted down in her diary her disappointment at not seeing Felix, whose prolonged absence in England she could not understand, Abraham and Mr. Lovie, *alias* Felix Mendelssohn, crossed the Channel, and, after a short stay at Horchheim, hastened to Berlin. The surprise was completely successful. Felix spent a few happy days with the family, and then went to Düsseldorf, where we leave him for a time, pursuing the events that had happened at Berlin.

The youngest son, Paul, also had, on May 6, 1831, left the parental roof, and gone as a merchant to London, where he was received with open arms by Klingemann. The latter wrote to Paul regarding the time of his arrival in London: 'You are coming to England at the right moment, just in time for the Reform Bill, and in that respect are more fortunate than Felix, who arrived when the Catholic Emancipation Bill was passed and forgotten a whole fortnight, whilst he in his innocence looked about for it in all directions and was quite astonished not to

see it. Had you, for instance, arrived the day before yesterday, when public opinion was loudly demanding an illumination for the benefit of the oil and tallow trade, all our dark windows might have been smashed, so that the next day you would have believed in one kind of freedom at least, freedom of air. Moreover, you would have heard the strange roar of an imposing mass of people passing through the streets like a hurricane, and inspiring respect by its very want of respectability. I have a mind to treat you in this letter to some dreadful inventions about politics, so that the people at home may ultimately spoil and pet you the more for believing that you are walking into a dangerous crater of revolution; but I think there is no need for it: they are a good and loving set, your relatives.'

For the one remaining child, Rebecca, the time had also come that would place her on her own track in life. She was less musical than Felix and Fanny, but distinguished beyond all the others by the acuteness of her understanding, her bright intellect and ready wit.

No sooner was Fanny's engagement everybody's secret than the younger sister was besieged by men of eminent intellect and talent, claimants for her hand. None of them, however, succeeded in winning Rebecca's affections, until Professor Dirichlet (before mentioned in a letter of Fanny's to Klingemann [1]) entered the lists and carried away the victory from all rivals.

[1] See p. 164.

DIRICHLET.

Gustav Peter Lejeune Dirichlet was born on the 13th of February, 1805, at Düren, a little town between Cologne and Aix-la-Chapelle, where his father was Director of the post-office. The father, a gentle, pleasant, amiable man, and the mother, a cultivated, intellectual woman, gave their clever boy a careful education, although they must now and then have had a hard time of it, as they were far from well off, rich only in children, of whom they possessed eleven. From his early youth the boy had showed a rare capacity and love for mathematics. Before he was twelve years old he used to spend all his pocket-money in the purchase of mathematical books, and employed all his leisure time, and especially the evening, in the study of them. To those who tried to dissuade him from this pursuit, and represented to him that he could not possibly understand those books, he replied, 'I read them until I understand them.' His parents wished him to become a merchant, but the boy showed such a great aversion to this profession, and so keen a desire for study, that they sent him in 1817 to Bonn, to the Gymnasium. Thus he left his parents' house, at the age of twelve years, never to come back there but for short visits. He remained two years in Bonn, working hard, especially in mathematics and history. Of all historical events, then already and subsequently through his whole life, it was French history that interested him principally, and he acquired a profound knowledge of the literature upon this subject. This was partly the consequence of the accounts of his parents, who had during a time even as French subjects witnessed the *grand drame*, partly of a period in his own life, which we shall have to speak about. But above all, his decidedly liberal views, to which

he remained faithful as long as he lived, and which made him acknowledge and love the French Revolution as the origin of all free movements on the Continent, gave this direction to his studies. After those two years he went to the Jesuits' College at Cologne (he was a Roman Catholic), and enjoyed the advantage of having George Simon Ohm (subsequently famous for his discovery of the law of electric resistance, called after him) as his teacher in mathematics. Thanks to Ohm's instruction and his own application, Dirichlet made great progress in his favourite study. In the year 1821, at the age of sixteen, he left school after passing his examinations for the university. His parents had given up the plan of a mercantile profession, but now they begged their son to choose at least a study offering a good chance of a career, for instance law. Dirichlet, however, once more succeeded in winning over his sensible and loving parents to his plan, by modestly but firmly declaring that he would comply, and devote his days to the study for a profession, but reserve his nights for pursuing mathematics. They gave their consent to his becoming a mathematician.

But where was he to find an opportunity for this study? Mathematics in Germany were then in a sad state of neglect. The university lectures hardly ever embraced more than elementary mathematics, the professors could not satisfy Dirichlet's desire of knowledge. Gauss's was the only celebrated name, but he did not possess the gift of communicating his knowledge to others; as soon as he understood a problem *himself*, he was satisfied and had done with it. It is said to have happened more than once that when a mathematician came to him with a new discovery about which he wanted the learned man's opinion, Gauss answered: 'Yes, yes, you are quite right, I found that out ten years ago; just open that drawer!' And out came an old faded paper, on which the astonished visitor found all complete—and generally in a much better, more pregnant form—his own bran-new discovery. This self-sufficient seclusion of course made Gauss anything but a good teacher. In France, however, that is to say in Paris (for in this branch of human activity too Felix's word held good, that 'Paris is France') mathematics were at this very

time in a flourishing state, and men like Laplace, Legendre, Fourier, Poisson, and Cauchy stood forth as brilliant meteors. Paris then was the place to which Dirichlet looked as the proper field for his studies, and his parents, who had some few good friends at Paris, dating from 'the French time,' consented to his going there. In May 1822 he repaired to this high school of mathematics.

In the beginning his life there was necessarily very simple, not even without privations, and his social intercourse very limited, his means being but scanty. But he always looked back upon this period, which gave him his first hearty draughts from the well of knowledge, with most intense pleasure, which—in remembrance at least—was even enhanced by the privations he had to undergo with regard to food, clothing, and lodgings. He tried to attend the lectures at the École Polytechnique in addition to those at the Collège de France and the Faculté des Sciences, but was unsuccessful, because the Prussian *chargé d'affaires* at Paris would not undertake to apply for permission from the French Minister without a special authorisation from the Prussian Minister von Altenstein! But how could a young student from a small Rhenish provincial town obtain this authorisation?

Soon, however, a great change took place in his quiet life: General Foy, a clever, highly cultured man, leader of the opposition in the chamber of deputies, and one of its most eloquent orators, looking back on a brilliant military career, wanted a teacher for his children, especially in the German language and literature. By the mediation of Larchet de Chamont, who had served with Foy, and was a friend of Dirichlet's parents, Dirichlet, who at the very first interview made a favourable impression on General Foy, obtained the appointment, with a fairly good salary, and such arrangements as left him ample time for the pursuit of his private studies. It is a strange coincidence that Foy should be the third French general (we have spoken of Sebastiani and Davoust in Henrietta's history) who thought German culture so desirable as to wish to secure it for their children. In the present case the obligation was a mutual one, for Dirichlet was lastingly and strongly influenced

by the example of an active, noble, and refined man like Foy, and by his intimate acquaintance with Madame Foy, who under his guidance took up her long-neglected German studies, and corrected the Germanisms of his French in return. Moreover, it was very important for his whole life that General Foy's house, frequented by the first notabilities in art and science as well as by the most illustrious members of the chambers, gave him an opportunity of looking on life in a larger field, and of hearing the great political questions discussed that led to the July Revolution of 1830, and created in him such vivid interest. The following extract from a letter of Klingemann's gives us a charming little picture referring to the time of Dirichlet's residence in the general's house. He writes to Rebecca on March 1, 1833: 'It is unfortunate that I do not know your lord and husband—what is the use of year by year sending each other the kindest messages by the best authorities (for instance, I now beg his own wife to remember me most kindly to him)? Until we have met and conversed we are to each other nothing but an idea. Not even through our works can we form a mutual acquaintance, since I do not write any, and his are to me incomprehensible. If you did but know what an unbounded respect I have for mathematics in general and for algebra in particular, from the simple reason of my absolute ignorance, you would feel how I tremble before even *you*, not to mention the professor himself! The only thing tangible about the latter I gathered when last in Paris from Madame Foy, who talked of him, *i.e.* praised him; and described him sitting on a little stove the whole day long, teaching the children and doing his own work at the same time.' The idea of an uncommonly tall thin young man sitting on a little iron stove and studying mathematics, whenever the children's lessons left him time, is comically touching and truly German.

And Dirichlet did remain a German, with all his love for France and for the splendour and charm of Paris life, which he got acquainted with in its best form. After having achieved a brilliant success through his first publication, which was read aloud in the Paris Academy, received into the collection of memorable scientific writings by foreigners, and forthwith

obtained him the fame of a distinguished mathematician, he became acquainted with Alexander von Humboldt, who was then living in Paris. General Foy had already mentioned Dirichlet to him as an excellent scholar, but Humboldt had not thought much of this praise as coming from an incompetent judge. Dirichlet's first work convinced him: Humboldt received the young man with exceeding kindness, and a friendship began between the two which death alone terminated. At their very first meeting Dirichlet mentioned to Humboldt his intention of going back to Germany after a while, and Humboldt encouraged him by the assurance that, considering the small number of good mathematicians, he would not fail to find a suitable place in Germany as soon as he liked. The death of Foy, November 1825, and the influence of Humboldt, who soon afterwards left Paris, made Dirichlet carry out his resolution of returning to his own country. The 'suitable place,' however, which Humboldt had represented as within easy reach, remained out of sight. Shortly before, negotiations even with Gauss, about an appointment at Berlin, carried on for years, had been broken off for the want of a few hundred thalers. It was not to be supposed that they who for such a trifle had failed to secure to themselves the highest mathematical celebrity would make particularly brilliant offers to a young man not yet twenty-one. The untiring exertions and great influence of a man like Humboldt, who induced the most distinguished members of the Academy to promote Dirichlet's interests, and the energetic intercession of Gauss, were needed to obtain for Dirichlet a salary of 400 thalers (60*l.*) to enter upon the career of a professor at the University of Breslau. But Dirichlet, whose wants, to the end of his life, were easily satisfied, accepted the offer, hoping that his own knowledge and Humboldt's friendship would in the course of time succeed in procuring him a proper situation. He was not comfortable at Breslau, where a great many obsolete notions appear to have prevailed in the university customs at that time—several professors, for instance, were quite shocked at his being excused the public Latin disputation. The students could not accustom themselves to his way of teaching; and he would not conde-

scend to join the many coteries of the place. Thus it came to pass that during the three terms of his residence at Breslau he never gained that local or provincial celebrity which is more efficacious in narrow circles than the universal acknowledgment of the first men of science. The latter he found in a rich measure. Bessel wrote to Humboldt about a treatise Dirichlet published at that time: 'Who would have believed that any genius could succeed in reducing such apparent difficulties to such simple results! If signed "Lagrange," nobody would question the authenticity of it!' And Fourier entreated Dirichlet, and tried to avail himself of Larchet de Chamont's influence, to induce him to return to Paris, where he felt sure it was his vocation to occupy a high position at the Academy.

Dirichlet, however, preferred a sphere of action, however modest, in his own country. About that time the post of a teacher of mathematics at the Berlin Military Academy was vacant, and Humboldt took the opportunity of recommending Dirichlet. But both General Radowitz and the minister of war hesitated to give him the appointment definitely, on the ground that he was too young to be made a teacher of officers. At the same time he was deemed old enough to exercise the office *ad interim*, and so, Altenstein giving him one year's provisional leave, he commenced the instruction at the military school in autumn 1828, and continued there till 1855, when he left Berlin for Göttingen. During the first few years the intercourse with the officers, young men of his own age, was very pleasant; but later on, when there were at the university a great number of students able and desirous to follow him with true scientific interest into the higher regions of mathematics, his position with the military students, who attended his lectures only from compulsion and only rarely showed any love and understanding of the subject, became very oppressive. Thus the military academy, which first brought him to Berlin, twenty-seven years afterwards was the cause of his leaving it.

Soon after his arrival at Berlin he underwent the formalities necessary for being allowed to teach at the university; for, although he was a professor at Breslau, yet a title obtained at another university did not in itself confer on him the *venia*

docendi at the Berlin university, and it was not till 1831 that he was definitively appointed professor extraordinary there. It is strange that Humboldt, whose influence on Dirichlet's outward position in life is so manifest, had indirectly, also in another way, a hand in shaping his destiny, by introducing him to the Mendelssohns.

Dirichlet from the very beginning admired Rebecca, and she was not insensible to his attentions; but for some time he met with resistance from her parents, who perhaps preferred other suitors for Rebecca's hand, and were not sufficiently convinced of the earnestness and stability of his love.

In the course of time, however, and especially owing to the endeavours of Fanny and Hensel, they were made to alter their sentiments. The engagement took place on the 5th of November 1831, and the wedding in May 1832. The Dirichlets also settled under the parental roof, and thus Abraham and Leah had the happiness of at least keeping their daughters near them. On July 2, 1833, the first child, Walter, was born to the young couple.

The year 1834 brought fresh changes. Paul came home from England, and early in the year entered the counting-house of the old-established firm Mendelssohn and Co., then represented by Joseph Mendelssohn and his son Alexander. He subsequently became a partner in the business, and married Albertine Heine, who had for some time belonged to the friends of the family.

Felix spent the month of September 1834 at Berlin. The relations between him and his father became more and more intimate, and on Felix's part bordered on adoration—a feeling very natural in him, and well deserved by Abraham. Increasing years had softened his originally somewhat hard and severe nature, and made it more gentle and harmonious, but at the same time a sad token of declining age began to show itself. Even during his journey to England his short-sightedness had proved a great drawback to him; and the complaint rapidly developed to cataract, so that at last he had only just a glimmer of light. He bore his misfortune with wonderful equanimity and resignation, and manifested the deepest

gratitude to his daughters, who by turns read and wrote for him. In 1835 an operation was contemplated. With his children he stood more and more on the footing of an experienced friend, and to Felix especially he was the loving but uncompromising adviser at every step in life.

THE YEAR 1835.

THE musical festival took place at Cologne, this spring, under Felix's direction, and was attended by both parents, the Dirichlets, and the Hensels. After a very pleasant and successful festival, Felix accompanied his parents to Berlin, where Leah writes to Rebecca, who had gone on to Ostend:—

'Une douce sympathie règne entre nous, chère enfant!' We left Cologne on the 1st, and arrived here on the 8th. That Leah was well taken care of in Abraham's bosom you will, I dare say, have learnt through Felix, who has written to you from all the places we passed, with true brotherly affection. But his modesty prevents his telling you that he is a model sick-nurse, real to all intents and purposes, and ideal through his charming, watchful affection. He did not in the most literal sense of the word allow my foot to tread on hard ground, which considering the number of stairs and doorsteps was a difficult task. 'He has a talent for *everything*,' said R. once on a different occasion. Indeed he took rather too much care of me, and kept me somewhat like one of Passalaqua's mummies.[1] Laughing and joking was all he gave me leave for, and that we had plenty of. Every other excitement was carefully avoided, and even Hercules on Wilhelmshöhe was forbidden as too dangerous an individual; though I am sure that to throw myself into his arms would have done me less harm than the constant longing for it. As we approached Cassel, we saw the great figure within half a mile, and in the evening Marie asked me, 'Is Hercules a very eminent man?' I liked that so much that I could not answer for laughing.

[1] Passalaqua was then director of the Egyptian collection at the Berlin Museum.

I advise you to let your mine profit by the excellent opportunities she has for learning the noble art of cooking scientifically on such a large scale and in such various styles as on the Rhine. In travelling towards our poor country we must leave behind us some sweet habit or other, some noble comfort or other, one by one, as we approach the end of our journey. O Albert the Bear, they ought to have called you Albert the Ass!

I trust that our absurd rebellion of August 3rd and 4th, exaggerated by Belgian lies, may not have affected you any more than it did us. The following bit of street-boy poetry is its best result:—

Heil Dir im Siegerkranz,
Heut' bleibt keene Scheibe janz.[1]

But unhappily much innocent blood has been shed, for although the *Staatszeitung* stated correctly that the soldiers who were hit by stones did not use their firearms, they nevertheless—though the fact was passed over in silence, were not sparing in the use of other arms. Dieffenbach told us that he alone had to dress the wounds of three people in a dangerous state. How many wounded there were altogether, and if there were any killed, is not officially known at all, according to the fine principle of our government not to publish anything of that kind, and therefore to give all the more scope for exaggerated gossip. They say that somebody proposed to the king the Paris plan of dispersing the mob by the fire-engines, and that he answered in his own laconic way, 'Sure to be in bad condition,' which I think very amusing.

When we were at a distance of two days from Berlin, I begged Felix to 'preserve' at least some of his good spirits for Berlin, and I perceive that he is trying hard to do it, but without perfect success, and I do not say too much when I maintain that even his physiognomy is changed, and he does not look so handsome and lively as he did on the Rhine. Both Schadow and Hildebrand say that to paint his portrait is so difficult, on

[1] Hail to thee in victory's crown,
Break all the glass in town.

account of his ever-varying expression; and they would agree with me now. However, he takes all the pains he can, and every additional day he remains is noted down in my grateful heart. A good thing that he is working at his 'St. Paul' so eagerly. He is copying the first part, and making many alterations as he goes over it: you know he always does, when he goes through his compositions a second time. One day he played to us splendidly on the old broken-winded Broadwood, from which he still found it possible to draw melody, sound, sweetness, and power. I believe it was in honour of Louis Heidemann, who plays so well himself: you know how two listening ears can inspire him. That I appreciate him is not new to you. God bless him! He has not yet fixed the day of his departure, and for that I thank him too. When one takes to counting the hours, they seem to fly still more rapidly, and every minute reproaches you for not having still more carefully laid hold of it.

The Hensels went to Paris after the Cologne festival, and Fanny's opinions on French painters and paintings may be gathered from the following letter to her father:—

July 10, 1835.—Dear father, you appear to be a little afraid that Hensel may not do justice to Paris, but I think his intention of doing so is sufficiently proved by his very decision to undertake the journey. Surely, it would be stupid to spend so much money, time, and strength merely to be able to say afterwards, 'Ce n'est que cela?' He sees and hears with the greatest impartiality, and, as always, with the desire to learn. It stands to reason that he cannot praise everything, and I even believe we shall quarrel about some few points. But upon the whole you could be pleased with his way of employing his time. You know that after his last attack he may not run about as much as he did at first, and I am afraid that we must leave a good many interesting things unseen or half seen, as our time and means do not allow us to stay beyond a month. To *live* here I cannot, from what information we gather from the artists themselves, think desirable, for, though the orders they receive be sometimes enormous, the amount of intrigue, impediment,

and meanness they have to encounter is equally enormous, and it is quite mortifying to see how reputations are trodden down by the same public that has created them. Within the fortnight we have now spent here we have witnessed two striking instances. Everybody agrees that it is by such treatment that Gros was brought so far as to throw himself into the Seine; and Delaroche is in such a state of despair at the perfidious way in which they have retracted an order he had already received to decorate a church with frescoes, that I should not be astonished if he went the same way. However, to go to Paris some day for a twelvemonth, paint a picture here, and make a real study of the Musée, Hensel would like very much. All the artists who have seen his things advise him to send a picture to the exhibition, if possible the large one: but they all agree that he must come himself as a safeguard to his work, which might otherwise experience ill-treatment. They quote Delaroche as a precedent: whilst he was making the preparatory studies for his church in Italy, they withdrew the commission from him, and this disgraceful act could not even be prevented by Vernet (Delaroche's father-in-law), though he was on the spot. Friends are of no use, they say, you must be present in person, and with such difficulties the thing is of course impossible. The one thing I really envy the artists here is the splendid way in which they see their paintings published. There is Calamatta, who works almost exclusively after Ingres; and how beautifully Delaroche's things are engraved!

The Hensels could not fail to form very interesting acquaintances—with Delaroche and Vernet, for instance. Fanny describes the dress of the latter when working in his studio—like that of a dancing-master, shoes, white trousers, jacket, and a red scarf round his waist. Five years later this clever eccentric man went about the streets of Rome in an oriental costume, dagger and pistols in his belt, exactly like a Turk, as Hensel has, during half an hour's sitting, made a sketch of him. Fanny took a lively interest in Gérard, who had witnessed the whole period of revolution and empire, and possessed portraits—by his own hand—of the most eminent persons of

that time. Fanny mentions those of Talma, Mdlle. Mars, Napoleon in his youth, Humboldt, Canova.

Towards the end of their visit a fearful event happened, which contributed to give a sad colouring to their whole remembrance of Paris—the Fieschi Attempt.

Under the impression of this occurrence the Hensels left Paris. Travelling disasters, however, pursued them still further. They went to Boulogne, where Fanny was to take sea-baths, but found the place overcrowded, especially with English people, so that several days passed in looking for lodgings. The rooms they found at last proved to be in such a dilapidated condition that after they had occupied them for a few days a shower of rain brought down the ceiling, and a stream of water rushed through the roof into the room. Then, owing to bad postal arrangements, Berlin letters were delayed as much as a fortnight, and to complete the sum of calamities Fanny was seized with a violent inflammation of the eyes, which forbade all occupation and the enjoyment of open air. Such a fashionable sea-side place, fashionable especially for the English, was moreover exorbitantly expensive, which added to the disadvantageous light shed over the whole. The result of it all was that Fanny ever after regarded Boulogne with profound dislike. Pleasant society was the only redeeming point: among them Heinrich Heine, who had here his well-known adventure with some English ladies, who had fixed upon the reading-room for the purpose of carrying on a very loud conversation, and were driven away by Heine's saying: 'Ladies, if my reading disturbs your talking, I can go somewhere else.' Then there was Mrs. Austin, the English authoress, a very amiable lady. Lastly Klingemann, came over for three days from London, and spent a delightful time with them. He then made Wilhelm Hensel's acquaintance for the first time.

About the journey home Fanny writes to Klingemann:—

Berlin: October 17, 1835.

We have to thank you for the only three agreeable days we passed at Boulogne, for I know not what kind spirit moved our tormentor of a landlord to leave us unmolested for just those

few days, so that we could at least enjoy the pleasure of your visit without reserve. After you had gone on board, on that glorious blue day, we stood a long time following the steamer with our eyes, and watching its straightly rising column of smoke, the good promise of which being fulfilled, with passengers and poodle safely landed on the other side, was a welcome piece of news for us on the eve of our leaving Boulogne—well, you had only just left us when our troubles began again. We parted in mutual discontent, and the weather was such that Boulogne alone could produce the like of it, and then only in our honour. In storm and torrents of rain the inhospitable place saw us depart, but in Calais the weather had so far improved that we could visit the port and convince ourselves that it is not worth seeing—a thing which nobody will ever believe. We passed the night at Dunkirk, and again visited the port the next morning. My happening to come to Dunkirk gave me a strange feeling, for the name had always, ever since the time of my geography lessons, appeared to me particularly foreign and far away, somewhat like a sort of East Indian place, quite outside the possible reach of any Berlin soul, and now I had actually been there and spent a night at Dunkirk in an excellent hotel. From there to the next station, which is in Belgium, you drive for several leagues over the wet sands on a natural road of shells. A singularly charming drive it was, for hours together nothing but the sea to the left and the downs to the right. By mistake we got to Ostend, where we came too late for my sister, but had a last magnificent look of the sea at full tide. In the afternoon we reached Bruges, and spent the few last hours of the day and the few first of the next day in inspecting this wonderful old town. I do not know whether you are acquainted with Belgium, and am afraid that I am telling you things you know ten times better than I; but never mind, when the heart is full the lip, or rather the pen, overflows, and I cannot deny that my heart is still full of Belgium. When in Bruges you pass through the well-preserved clean streets of the fifteenth century to the hospital where Hemelink lay ill, and where after his recovery he painted that beautiful pious picture; when you see, kneeling in their golden frames, the graceful sisters of charity, and then the same

living faces at prayers in their church or busy about the house; when you see the same Roman Catholic people, in the same old costume, the same grave black cloaks, walking to the same venerable, splendid churches, an involuntary deception comes over your mind and senses. You feel inclined to ask the first person you pass in the street which is the house of noble Master Hemelink, or that of the Brothers Eyk, and, if he went on without answering, you would only think that he understood no German, and you no Flemish.

The following day we proceeded to Ghent, where we spent the remaining hours of daylight in sight-seeing, through rain and dirt so terrible that precaution appeared vain and I quite gave up picking my way. When we came home we had to hang up all our things to dry. Ghent has quite a different character from Bruges, much more of the sixteenth century, whilst Antwerp rather represents the seventeenth. I am sorry to say they are renovating a good deal at Ghent, and a great many of the splendid quaint old buildings are being replaced by uninteresting new ones. Enough, however, of what is beautiful remains to supply ten towns like Berlin (do not tell anybody). The many quays, the numberless bridges, the curious water-contrivances, the beautiful old churches, the greater part of the celebrated Altar-piece of Eyk, of which we possess the smaller fragment—all this makes Ghent in its way no less interesting than Bruges is in another way. We now went on to Antwerp, for us the culmination-point, at any rate of our journey homewards: a truly regal town. I have never seen Hensel so transported as he was in the cathedral, which contains Rubens's greatest painting, the Descent from the Cross. I assure you, if it had been possible we might easily have decided to stop at Antwerp. There only can Rubens be thoroughly made acquaintance with, and several churches and museums contain masterpieces of his, of which one can form an idea nowhere else. The streets and the docks also are incomparably grand.

In Brussels we led a more social life, as we found several friends who took a great pleasure in paying debts of hospitality. At the same time, we saw all that could be seen in two days. We also passed through Louvain, where we saw the famous town-

hall and a very remarkable private collection, and stopped just long enough to say good-bye to the cathedral and all this magnificence of art. We hastened to Bonn, where we met the Dirichlets and looked forward to some days of rest, for we felt exhausted after our week of delightful travelling; I, for my part, especially from that state of constant admiration which is extremely pleasant, but also extremely fatiguing.

The morning of the 19th at Bonn was spent in pleasant talk and making plans for a comfortable journey home with the Dirichlets, which was to compensate for all the drawbacks they had encountered, when a letter arrived from Berlin urgently desiring Hensel's speedy return, as his mother was seriously ill. The Hensels started at once, and travelling by way of Leipzig, where they met Felix, then settled there, reached Berlin on the 27th of September. Hensel found his mother still alive, but on the 4th of October she died. Her death had been expected for some time, and might be considered as a blessed release for so aged a woman. But it proved the precursor of another sudden and unexpected blow to the whole family.

We left Felix in the autumn of 1833, when he definitely entered upon his office at Düsseldorf, and just now we have seen that in the autumn of 1835 he went thence to Leipzig. These two years formed a period of his life rich both in work and in great enjoyment. Everything his father had anticipated of his position in Düsseldorf became realised to the fullest extent—nay, it was even surpassed. His duties were threefold. In the first place he had to superintend all the musical affairs and interests of the town, which were partly in a process of formation, partly in a state of chaotic and obsolete confusion. Closely connected with this was the direction of the music for the church solemnities of the almost entirely Catholic town. In the very beginning there happened an episode, mentioned in Felix's letters,[1] with the former conductor of this church-music.

'A very crabbed old musician in a threadbare coat was summoned. When he came and they attacked him he declared that he neither could nor would have better music; if any

[1] Letter to Rebecca of October 26, 1833, Lady Wallace's translation.

improvement was required, some one else must be employed; that he knew perfectly what vast pretensions some people made nowadays, everything was expected to sound so beautiful—this had not been the case in his day, and he played just as well now as formerly. I was really very reluctant to take the affair out of his hands, though there could be no doubt that others would do infinitely better; and I could not help thinking how I should myself feel were *I* to be summoned some fifty years hence to a town-hall, and spoken to in this strain, and a young greenhorn snubbed me, and my coat were seedy, and I had not the most remote idea why the music should be better; and I felt rather uncomfortable.'

But now good music had first to be procured, so that the better set of musicians might have something proper to perform. Felix therefore, as he expressed himself, 'travelled through his domains,' that is to say, he went to Elberfeld, Bonn, and Cologne, rummaged through the libraries, and returned with a rich store of old Italian church-music to Düsseldorf. But the Düsseldorf people meanwhile, for the present, felt no interest in Misereres of Allegri and Bai, and motets of Orlando Lasso and Pergolesi, and thought of nothing but the Crown Prince of Prussia, afterwards Frederic William IV., who was passing through Düsseldorf. Triumphal arches, the pealing of bells, the firing of cannon, and a dinner were the inevitable results. Düsseldorf wanted also to give a *fête* in his honour, and Felix suggested as a leading idea, in remembrance of the musical festival of last spring, 'Israel in Egypt,' with *tableaux vivants*, arranged by Bendemann and Hübner. The choruses were still fresh in remembrance, and the preparations therefore comparatively simple and demanding little time. The *fête* is minutely described in Felix's letters. After this interruption serious work was resumed. The church-music took quite a new aspect. Felix even appears to have taken such an interest in this essentially catholic branch of music (he was quite convinced that real church-music, *i.e.* music forming an integral part of the service, was impossible in Protestantism), that for a moment he was half inclined to write a mass, which, 'whatever it might turn out, would at all events be the only mass written with a constant

remembrance of its sacred purpose,' and which every one must regret he did not write.

Another very different object claimed a great part of his time. The artistic interest then prevalent at Düsseldorf had, under the influence of Immermann, created a strong desire for the foundation of a theatre. Immermann entertained the same hope which Lessing had formerly nourished at Hamburg, and which brought the same bitter disappointment to both—the hope of permanently founding a truly noble classical theatre. In the present case the beginning was highly promising, and indeed more hopeful soil and ground could hardly have been found for such an undertaking than at Düsseldorf in 1834. The many artistic elements, the young painters, the bright character of the whole people, the good-fellowship prevailing among them all, which made the artists paint decorations for Immermann and Immermann glorify their festivals by his poetry, and lastly the enterprise, headed by a tough, resolute, despotic individuality like Immermann's, such as is essentially required for the management of such an institute, all this augured much good. Immermann thought he had found the proper helpmate for his work in Felix, and Felix was quite ready to join him and to take upon himself the direction of the opera, whilst Immermann superintended the drama. They had formed an especial union for the purpose of producing a number of so-called 'classical representations,' the first of which was to be 'Don Juan.' The Düsseldorf opposition—and according to human nature opposition there will be to the best undertakings—took offence at the name of 'classical representations,' in which they saw arrogance, and at a rise in the prices of admission, so that a dreadful tumult arose, which Felix describes in the following letter to his father.[1]

The people in Düsseldorf are an excitable race. The 'Don Juan' affair amused me, although riotous enough, and Immermann had a sharp attack of fever from sheer vexation. As you, dear mother, like to read newspapers, you shall receive in my next letter all the printed articles on the subject, which

[1] Felix's letter, December 28, 1833, Lady Wallace's translation.

engrossed the attention of the whole town for three long days. After the 'grand scandal' had fairly begun, and the curtain had been three times dropped and drawn up again, after the first duet of the second act had been sung, entirely drowned by whistling, shouting, and howling, after a newspaper had been flung to the manager on the stage that he might read it aloud, who on this went off in a violent huff, the curtain being dropped for the fourth time—I was about to lay down my *bâton*, though I would far rather have thrown it at the head of some of these fellows, when the uproar suddenly subsided. The rioters were hoarse, and the well-conducted people brightened up; in short, the second act was played in the midst of the most profound silence, and much applause at the close. After it was over all the actors were called for, but no one came, and Immermann and I consulted together in a shower of fiery rain and gunpowder smoke—among the black demons—as to what was to be done. I declared that until the company and I had received some apology I would not again conduct the opera; then came a deputation of several members of the orchestra, who in turn said that if I did not conduct they would not play; then the manager of the theatre began to lament, as he had already disposed of all the tickets for the next performance. Immermann snubbed everybody all round, and in this graceful manner we retreated from the field.

Next day in every corner appeared, 'Owing to obstacles that had arisen,' etc., and all the people whom we met in the streets could talk of nothing but this disturbance. The newspapers were filled with articles on the subject; the instigator of the riot justified himself, and declared that in spite of it all he had had great enjoyment, for which he felt grateful to me, and to the company, and he gave his name. As he is a government secretary, the president summoned him, blew him up tremendously, and sent him to the director, who also blew him up tremendously. The soldiers who had taken part in the tumult were treated in the same manner by the officers. The Association for the Promotion of Music issued a manifesto, begging for a repetition of the opera and denouncing the disturbance. The theatrical committee intimated that if the slightest inter-

ruption of the performance ever again occurred, they would instantly dissolve. I procured also from the committee full powers to stop the music in case of any unseemly noise. Last Monday it was to be given again; in the morning it was universally reported that the manager was to be hissed on account of his recent testiness; Immermann was seized with fever, and I do assure you that is was with feelings the reverse of pleasant that I took my place in the orchestra at the beginning, being resolved to stop the performance if there was the slightest disorder. But the moment I advanced to my desk the audience received me with loud applause, called for a flourish of trumpets in my honour, and insisted on encoring it three times amid a precious row; then all were as still as mice, while each actor received his share of applause; in short, the public were now as polite as they formerly were unruly. I wish you had seen the performance: individual parts could not, I feel sure, have been better given; the quartet, for instance, and the ghost in the last finale, and almost all of Leporello's part, went splendidly, and caused me the greatest pleasure. I am so glad to hear that the singers, who I am told were prejudiced against me personally at first, as well as against these classical performances, now say they would go to the death for me, and are all impatience for the time when I am to give another opera.

The 'classical performances' were thus fairly launched. 'Don Juan' was followed by 'Egmont,' with Beethoven's music. But the greatest success was the 'Wasserträger' (*Deux journées*). It had for long years completely disappeared from the stage. The public thought it a strange whim of the committee to wish to warm up such an antiquated thing, and all the singers apprehended a repetition of the 'Don Juan' scandal.

'This, however,' Felix writes,[1] 'gave exactly the right tone; such tremor, excitement, and emotion pervaded the whole that at the second number the Düsseldorf opposition kindled into enthusiasm, and applauded and shouted and wept by turns. A better Wasserträger than Günther I never saw; he was most touching and natural, and yet with a shade of homeliness too,

[1] Letter to his father, March 28, 1834, Lady Wallace's translation.

so that the *noblesse* might not appear too factitious. He was immensely applauded, and twice called forward. This rather spoiled him for the second performance, when he overacted his part, and was too confident. But I wish you could have seen him the first time! It is long since I have had such a delightful evening in the theatre, for I took part in the performance like one of the spectators, and laughed, and applauded, and shouted 'bravo!' conducting carefully all the time; the choruses in the second act went like pistol-shooting. The stage was crowded between the acts, every one pleased, and congratulating the singers. The orchestra played with precision, except a few unskilful shots, when, in spite of all my threats and warnings, I could not prevail on them to take their eyes off the stage and look at their notes.'

We insert this extract chiefly for the purpose of showing why harmony between Felix and Immermann could not long continue. The two looked on the matter from too entirely different a point of view. Felix was amused at the 'Don Juan' affair, which gave Immermann a violent fever from vexation and took pleasure in the performances which Immermann regarded as the most anxious matter in the world. Felix writes to his father: 'A good performance in the Düsseldorf theatre does not indeed find its way into the world at large, perhaps not beyond the Düssel, but when I succeed in thoroughly cheering and enlivening by the good music both myself and all the audience, that is worth something too.' Immermann was ready to sacrifice his whole career and devote all his powers to this undertaking, which Felix only treated as an accessory occupation. In a word, the Düsseldorf theatre was to Immermann a heartfelt concern of the most vital and essential nature, whilst Felix's vital interest lay elsewhere, in his own compositions.

Great pleasure as he received from performances like that of the 'Wasserträger,' he very soon began to feel a dislike to some portion of the theatrical affairs, the stage-gossip, the hunting for and producing of effect, the newspapers' backbiting, and above all the exorbitant claims on his time, which kept him away 'from his real purpose, his own work.' Consequently at a meeting of the theatrical association, which took place

soon after the performance of the 'Wasserträger,' he resigned some part of his office, reserving for himself the chief superintendence of the musical affairs, arrangement of the orchestra, engagement of the singers, and the performance of an opera once a month. He also resigned his salary, for which a second conductor was now appointed. He wanted to occupy a totally independent position with regard to the theatre, and to be considered only as a friend of the cause. Such a position, however, is not tenable for a permanency, the less so with a conscientious character like that of Felix, who could not allow himself to treat the matter with any negligence and let things take their course, but who, as long as he had a part in it, took care of the part with unremitting faith and earnest zeal, until the whole matter became to him literally intolerable. This moment arrived when, in autumn 1834, the new contracts and engagements had to be concluded and negotiated. That little incident with the old church-musician shows that Felix was full of kind and delicate feeling: a nature like his was not fit for bickering and haggling with the rabble in the train of a theatre, a provincial theatre especially. He has himself given us a vivid description of 'the sufferings of a Düsseldorf Intendant' in a letter to Rebecca.[1]

The thing most to be regretted was that his relations to Immermann, from being extremely friendly, grew more and more cool, and at last almost hostile. The antagonism of the two characters manifested itself too strongly on this question, and Immermann, hindered by Felix in his ideal pursuit, looked on him as an apostate from the righteous cause of a national theatre. If to the various duties of his office, the many concerts and performances in the singing-association, in church, and in the theatre, we add the concerts given in other places (a lively and interesting letter treats of one such professional tour to Elberfield and Barmen), the musical festival at Aix-la-Chapelle, 1834, which indeed he attended only as a listener, and where he met Hiller and Chopin from Paris,[2] and the Cologne festival of 1835—if we sum

[1] The letter of November 28, 1834.

[2] They had intimated to him to propose himself as a conductor, to do which went against his principles.

up all this, which happened in the space of two years, it appears truly astonishing that he should have looked upon it all in the light of mere subordinate matter, which he did not allow to retard his wonderful activity as a composer. From this period date the rondo in E flat (Op. 29), and the capriccio in A minor for piano solo (Op. 33, No. 1), the capriccio in E major and a fugue in A flat (Op. 35, No. 4), many songs, with and without words, among them 'Auf Flügeln des Gesanges,' and the overture to 'The Lovely Melusine.'

All this various music and extensive work was in some respects only a preparatory study for the greatest work that Felix had hitherto undertaken, the composition of which is also comprised in the Düsseldorf period, namely, the oratorio of 'St. Paul.' To this work Felix, whose active disposition needed no spur, was constantly urged and driven by his father, as if with a presentiment both of the high place among composers to which this work would raise his son, and of his own death before it was possible for him to hear it performed. This oratorio was thus to Felix an affair of heart and conscience, compared to which everything else appeared to him of secondary importance. We know through his published letters how seriously he weighed and considered every part of it, how thoroughly he discussed the text, in all its bearings, with his friends Schubring and Bauer; how in this also his father, in that beautiful letter of March 10, 1835, gives him the best advice; how Felix towards the completion of the oratorio longs for the opinion of his sister Fanny, because to her he could look for a competent criticism (since 'the Düsseldorf friends being very enthusiastic about it does not prove much'). During all the engagements of his busy and varied life, the great work steadily advanced towards its accomplishment. At the time of their visit at Cologne for the musical festival the family got acquainted with such portions of the composition as were then finished, and they were as enthusiastic about it as the Düsseldorf friends. Abraham was quite satisfied, and then Felix considered his work to have passed the ordeal of an impartial and incorruptible criticism, and confidently looked forward to its general success. What a pleasure it would have been for the father if the oratorio could have been

produced at the festival of 1835, so that he might have witnessed his son's triumph! The words Felix wrote with his invitation to the Cologne festival, where none of his music was performed, would then have had even a more pregnant meaning:[1] 'You must be well aware that your presence at the festival would not only be no *gêne* to me, but on the contrary would cause me first to feel true joy and delight in my success. Allow me to take this opportunity to say to you that the approbation and enjoyment of the public, of which I am certainly very sensible, only really pleases me when I can write to tell you of it, because I know it rejoices you, and one word of praise from you is more truly precious to me and makes me happier than all the publics in the world applauding me in concert; and thus to see you among the audience would be the dearest of all rewards to me for my labours.'

The letter ends: 'My oratorio is to be performed in Frankfort in November, so Schelble writes to me; and much as I wish you to hear it soon, still I should prefer your hearing it first next year, at the festival. Before decidedly accepting the proposal, I have stipulated to wait till after the performance at Frankfort, that I may judge whether it be suitable for the festival; should this prove to be the case, as I hope and wish it may, it will have a much finer effect there; besides which, it is the festival that you like, and Whit Sunday instead of November; and above all I shall then know whether it pleases you or not, on which point I feel by no means sure.'

When the festival took place and 'St. Paul' was performed, Felix saw his father no more amongst the audience: he had then already suffered the first great grief of his life.

The difficulties with the theatre, which we have already described, and especially the estrangement from Immermann, gradually made Felix's life in Düsseldorf less pleasant than it was at first. The elementary condition of the musical institutes proved a great drawback. All good result was based on the unanimous co-operation of a number of people who, although giving their share spontaneously, had very different views as long as perfect concord and unanimity are preserved. But

[1] Letter to his father, April 3, 1835, Lady Wallace's translation.

alarming schisms began to manifest themselves; the harmony which is less easy to maintain in a provincial town than in a large community disappeared. And about that very time—no more favourable moment could have been imagined for making Felix accept—he received the offer of another position, the directorship of the Gewandhaus-concerts at Leipzig. And propitious as was the moment, the office itself was one which could not have been more acceptable.

Its advantages were similar to those at Düsseldorf, the place not being a government appointment subordinate to any official authority, but a free association, formed for the purpose of promoting good music, and desirous of engaging a director able to use the best means towards the realisation of that purpose. Leipzig too was a middle-sized German town, and the life there suited Felix very well. The bright, animated, intellectual, and social intercourse which in Düsseldorf was produced by the painting academy, was supplied at Leipzig by the great industry of the commercial town, above all by the book-trade and the university. And Leipzig had great advantages of its own. The Gewandhaus-concerts had existed for fifty-six years, and were thus a long-consolidated establishment. Such union may produce remarkable results, far superior to anything at Düsseldorf, where many things of musical importance were still in their very first period of development. Regular businesslike rules and forms were in existence, each had his own sharply defined department, conflicts about competency could not occur; and Felix, to whom the vague, wavering state of affairs in Düsseldorf had been a real infliction, felt most agreeably impressed with the difference in that respect which he met with at Leipzig.

The memory, too, of Sebastian Bach, and the fact of his having been Cantor at the Thomas-Kirche at Leipzig, had a peculiar charm for Felix, who was wrapt up in Bach, and had done so much for that master in reviving his St. Matthew's Passion-music.

In addition to all this, the much shorter distance between Leipzig and Berlin at that time, when railroads did not exist, exercised much weight in favour of Leipzig. He therefore met the very first negotiations about it with manifest readiness, and only begged for an explanation with regard to some few points,

especially the question whether in accepting the post he was not supplanting anybody else, in which case he must absolutely decline. All his doubts being satisfactorily removed, he entered upon his office as Kapellmeister of the Gewandhaus-concerts in autumn 1835, and soon afterwards (November 13, 1833) wrote to Fanny: 'Dr. Reiter arrived here charmed with the kind reception you gave him; he is in a real enthusiasm about father. On the other hand, I cannot deny that Mr. L.'s greatest ecstasy was created by Walter; then followed Sebastian, and only then your piano-playing. He said you ought to be a travelling artist, and would kill every one else by your playing. I said "Pourquoi?" for I was very cold, we were standing on the staircase of the concert-hall as we talked, and he could not get done with his account of your charming qualities.

'A. is here with M. If I said he had made a favourable impression on me, I should not speak the truth. He is the type of a speculating, grasping musician, with no other conversation but money-affairs, money-plans, money-losses—not his own money even: M., whom he took up five years ago, and who from top to toe is now nothing more but a music speculation, earns it for him. Whether a good speculation or not I do not care; I am sick of it. My interest in her would begin if she would set up a good quarrel with A. about the money, or if she ran away from him, but the present state of things is too wretched. Her singing, however, is said to be excellent, and she holds me in high esteem—but that goes for nothing.

'Fancy, dear Fanny, in Wieck's concert the other day I listened for the first time to my B minor capriccio (Clara played it like a witch), and I liked it very well. I am sure I had thought it quite a stupid thing, since you and Marx abused it so, but it has really a bright sound with the orchestra, and seems good enough by way of a concert-thing. I believe it is prettier than the one in E flat, but I believe that you believe the contrary.'

The Dirichlets, who during the Hensels' ill-adventured French journey had enjoyed a very pleasant tour through Belgium to Ostend, on their return to Berlin, on October 14, brought Felix with them for a few days, and Moscheles, then

staying at Leipzig. Fanny always numbered these days among the brightest and happiest of her life. The travellers arrived during the night, and the Hensels were roused in the morning with the joyful news, and then they prepared a surprise to the parents, the whole company going across the courtyard to the front house. The grand piano followed, and at once they began to play. The news soon reached the friends about the town, and two days passed in the happy animated strain of old times. Felix and Moscheles played beautifully; Abraham, who was nearly blind, in a duet the two performed together, mistook the one for the other, and was surprised at the rather elegant style of Felix and the lively natural playing of Moscheles, not finding out his mistake until they ended. On the second evening, immediately before Moscheles' departure, they extemporised together; when the parting moment came, Felix interrupted Moscheles by the signal of the diligence; then Moscheles took leave in a solemn, touching andante, was again interrupted by the signal, after which they joined in a finale. Abraham liked to dwell on this recollection in the following four weeks, talking of it in his own bright, clever way. The next morning Felix travelled back to Leipzig, promising to come again at Christmas. Abraham said: 'Well, humanly speaking, we may hope to be spared till then'—and Felix said good-bye to his father for the last time.

One more pleasant episode followed this, the visit of Hauser, the singer, whom Abraham liked very much and heard frequently. Fanny arranged a very brilliant Sunday-music, which made her father say that she had brought the thing to such a pitch that it could hardly go on. On November 14, Fanny's birthday was celebrated with great glee.

It has been mentioned in the beginning of this book that the latter days of Moses Mendelssohn were occupied by a literary controversy about Lessing. By a singular coincidence, something similar happened to Abraham. Shortly before his death, on November 15, in a conversation with Varnhagen von Ense, Varnhagen extolled and praised a few young German authors exorbitantly at the expense of Lessing. A violent quarrel ensued, which terminated by Varnhagen's leaving the

house rather excited, and without a conciliatory conclusion of the discussion.

After Abraham's death they found on his desk the following unfinished letter, the original of which was claimed by Varnhagen. A copy of it, in Fanny Hensel's handwriting, is among the family documents.

November 16, 1835.

Honoured Sir and Friend,—If you consider that Lessing during a great part of his life was my father's most intimate friend, deeply loved and esteemed by him; that Lessing has written 'Nathan,' 'Emilia Galotti,' 'The Education of Mankind,' 'Laokoon,' the 'Dramaturgie' (to which Germany owes more than to all the theatrical criticisms and feuilletons written since that time, viz. the knowledge of Shakespeare); that he was incontestibly a profound scholar; and that almost every line of his displays the clearest understanding united to the deepest feeling—you will kindly excuse me for speaking rather too warmly yesterday in his defence. I cannot deny that I was surprised at finding you, whom I have so often heard speak with the warmest admiration of Lessing and his works, 'Nathan' especially, and the views therein expressed—at now finding you place this man, who thought so highly of truth as to believe that it belonged to God alone and that he himself could only strive after it, in short this sun in which dark spots may be seen through smoked glasses, on a level with men who as yet have only shown spots, behind which we are allowed to suppose a sun. I might indeed have taken into consideration that you were merely following perhaps a momentary mood when you thus depreciated Lessing, and that you felt irritated by the opposition of an incompetent judge. Several of those young men are your personal friends, and it is generous in you to risk the utmost in order to save and raise their reputation. From the point of view of social rules alone, this consideration should have been my duty. . . .

On the 18th Abraham was still quite well, except a slight cough. Early on the following morning the family were roused by the news that he had been taken ill during the night.

They thought it an attack of apoplexy, but he was in full possession of his senses. The doctors, who were instantly called, considered his case so far from dangerous that they would not allow Felix to be written to, as it would merely cause him unnecessary alarm, and bring him to Berlin to no purpose. This was at ten o'clock. The patient turned round, saying he would sleep a little—and half an hour later he was dead. So rapidly, unexpectedly, gently, and quietly did he pass away that none of his children, who were gathered round the bed, could tell when death had come. It had always been his wish to die in this manner, and his wish was granted. Fanny concludes her description of his death with the words: 'So beautiful, unchanged, and calm was his face that we could remain near our loved one not only without a sensation of fear, but felt truly elevated in looking at him. The whole expression was so calm, the forehead so pure and beautiful, the position of the hands so mild! It was the end of the righteous, a beautiful, enviable end, and I pray to God for a similar death, and will strive through all my days to deserve it, as he deserved it. It was death in its most peaceful, beautiful aspect.'

The first care of the family was for the mother and for Felix. The former, with an excitable nervous system, prone to heart disease, and still feeling the effects of a serious illness, was in a state which might well create uneasiness. And then, Felix! How were they to break the terrible news to him, totally unprepared as he was, and clinging to his father with enthusiastic, almost fanatical, fondness? How might they soften the dreadful blow awaiting him?

Hensel volunteered at once to go to Leipzig, procured passport and carriage, and was off at half past two o'clock. On Saturday morning they both arrived in Berlin, Felix in an alarming condition of nervous restraint, weeping but little, and looking into the future with utter hopelessness. He could say nothing, could not shed a tear, and in short gave cause for the worst apprehensions. And indeed *his* loss was the greatest, if in afflictions like the loss of that father there be comparative degrees; or rather he had nothing to act as a softening counter-

balance in this inexpressible grief. The other children being married, and having their own domestic ties and duties, had partners in sorrow, and necessary occupations to divert their thoughts into other channels. Felix, unmarried, had not only lost what was dearest to him in the world, but nothing could divert him from the contemplation of his irreparable loss. At Leipzig his bare bachelor-rooms awaited him; and all his occupations, which had been the joy of his life, now appeared shallow, for his chief pleasure in those very occupations had been his father's interest and sympathy. After a few days he went back to Leipzig. The following two letters[1] to his friends Schubring and Bauer, written soon after his return to Leipzig, show the state of his mind:—

'Dear Schubring,—You have no doubt heard of the heavy stroke that has fallen on my happy life and those dear to me. It is the greatest misfortune that could have befallen me, and a trial that I must either strive to bear up against or must utterly sink under. I say this to myself after the lapse of three weeks, without the acute anguish of the first days, but I feel it the more deeply; a new life must begin for me, or all must be at an end: the old life is now severed. For our consolation and example, our mother bears her loss with the most wonderful composure and firmness; she comforts herself with her children and grandchildren, and thus strives to hide the chasm that can never be filled up. My brother and sisters do what they can to fulfil their duties better than ever, the more difficult they have become. I was ten days in Berlin, so that my mother might at least have us all round her; but I need scarcely tell you what those days were: you know it well, and no doubt you thought of me in that dark time. I do not know whether you are aware that, especially for some years past, my father was so good to me, so thoroughly my friend, that I was devoted to him with my whole soul, and during my long absences scarcely ever passed an hour without thinking of him; but as you knew him in his own home with us, in all his kindliness, you can well realise my state of mind. The only thing that now remains is

[1] December 6 and 9, 1835, Lady Wallace's translation.

to do one's duty, and this I strive to accomplish with all my strength, for he would wish it to be so if he were still here, and I shall never cease to endeavour to gain his approval as before, though I can no longer enjoy it.

'When I delayed answering your letter I little thought that I should have to answer it thus. Let me thank you for it now, and for all your kindness. One passage for "St. Paul" was excellent, "Der Du der rechte Vater bist." A chorus for it came forthwith into my head, which I shall very soon write down. I shall now work with double zeal at the completion of "St. Paul," for my father urged me to it in the very last letter he wrote to me, and he looked forward very impatiently to the completion of my work. I feel as if I must exert all my energies to finish it and make it as good as possible, and then think that he takes an interest in it. When it is done, God will direct what is to come next.'

To Bauer: 'I received your kind letter here on the very day when the christening in your family was to take place, on my return from Berlin, where I had gone in the hope of alleviating my mother's grief immediately after the loss of my father. So I received the intelligence of your happiness on again crossing the threshold of my empty room, when I felt for the first time in my inmost being what it is to suffer the most painful and bitter anguish. Indeed the wish which of all others every night recurred to my mind was that I might not survive this loss, because I so entirely clung, or rather still cling, to my father, that I do not know how I am to pass my life; for not only have I to deplore the loss of a father (a sorrow which of all others from my childhood I always thought the most acute), but also that of my best and most perfect friend for the last few years, and my instructor in art and life.

'It seemed to me so strange to read your letter, breathing only joy and satisfaction, and calling on me to rejoice with you on your future prospects, at the moment when I felt that my past was lost and gone for ever; but I thank you for wishing me, though so distant, to become your guest at the christening. My name may make a graver impression now than you probably anticipated, but I trust that impression will only be a grave

and not a painful one to you and your wife; and when in later years you tell your child of those whom you invited to his baptism, do not omit my name, but say to him that one of them too on that day began his life afresh, though in another sense, with new purposes and wishes, and with new prayers to God.'

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.